

Winter 52

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winter



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EDITOR

Joseph Barnett

ASSISTANT EDITOR

Joseph Kneip

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Donald Moorman

Paul Parks

Anthony Smith

Frank Unger

STAFF ARTIST

J. O. Smith

MODERATOR

Rev. Alvin Druhman, C.P.P.S.

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Their Seventh Hour ● frank unger

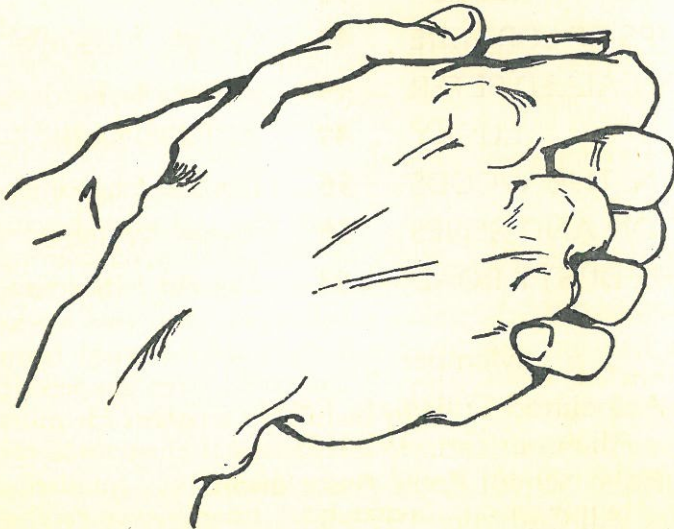
THE small town of Las Cruces languidly stirred as rays of an early, western sun crept through the dusty streets. Slowly, gradually, as if the miracle of creation was commencing, life spread over the tiny settlement. First one, then another, then still another yawning inhabitant stepped from the red, brick adobes. The bright glare forced a wrinkled frown upon faces, and familiar sounds of animation broke the quiescence of darkness. Across barren fields of milky sand flowed the strain of a wailing dog, the rustle of tripping tumbleweed, the whisper of a warm breeze . . . the tones of the *Angelus*, as the bells of Santa Marguerita announced the sixth

hour of morning.

Inside the ancient Spanish mission, entirely oblivious to any activity around him, knelt a young, heartbroken man. He was alone, alone with his thoughts, alone with his God. He had to think; he had to implore; he had to assemble his prayers into an irrecusable plea that would hasten the return of his wife. No longer could he feel her presence at his side, her shoulder pressed lightly against his. No longer could he sense the heavenly odor of her perfume. All these things had vanished, and now, in their place, hung a dismal, lonely emptiness brought on by himself.

Minutes slowly passed. The noise of the town grew, became louder, more intense; but the sorrowful man remained motionless, still kneeling in the first of the sagging, wooden pews, still gazing with tear-filled eyes at the huge cross upon the altar, still begging that his appeal be answered.

A bright ray of sunlight shone through the stained window to his left, causing momentary blindness and forcing his movement to another aisle. He stared now, at the dancing shadows of licking candles as



they began to cast their hypnotic spell upon him. He thought back, months back, thousands of miles back, to an office of the government in Munich, Germany. That was where it all started, this horrible nightmare that led to the disappearance of his wife, that led to his presence here, in this desolate town so far from everything. Munich . . . Germany . . .

Six, long, painful months had passed since he received the telegram announcing the birth of his son. What a feeling he experienced when he first read those words of his wife:

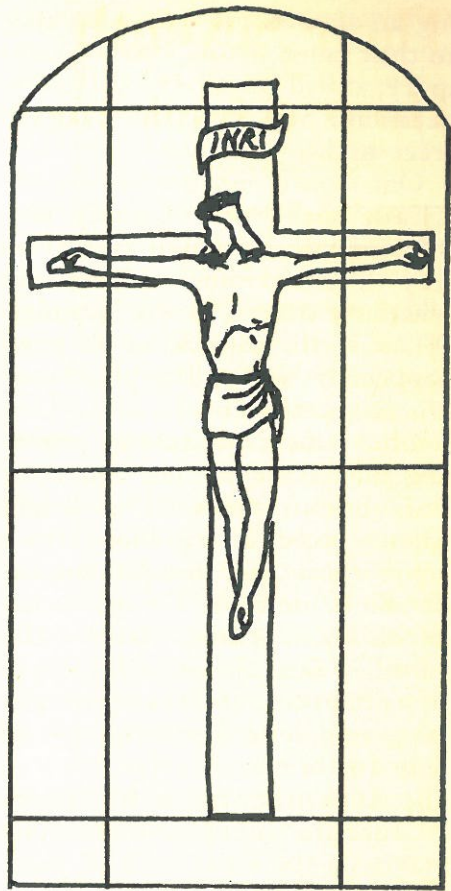
My Dearest,

We have a strong, healthy, blue-eyed son. I know the happiness that's now yours, and I thank God for this wonderful blessing. Please, dear, hurry home. I need you.

Your loving wife,
Laurie

A son, he had a son! That which he wanted most in life was now his. It seemed so impossible, so hard to believe and realize. He had a son, and now he was compelled to wait another six months before he could see him, before he could feel the fullness of his pride.

These months of waiting were the most horrible of his life. Almost daily, Laurie wrote and told him of the happenings of the growing child. How he slept, how he ate, how he crawled, every slight, minute detail of the tiny youth was related to him in a manner as only the perfect mother could have used. If only he'd



have realized it then. If only he'd have recognized what a true, loving mother she was. Maybe then, this wouldn't have ended the way it did.

What unbelievable agony he felt when the tragedy began, when her letters stopped coming to him. First three days, then five, then a full week, then two weeks . . . still there was no word from her. What could have happened? Why hadn't she written? He must have asked himself these same bewildering questions, hundreds, thousands of times, never receiv-

ing an answer. He sent telegrams to their home, wrote letters of inquiry, called on twelve different occasions. Still, he could find no trace of her whatever.

One month remained before his release, one month seeming like years. Then, he would be on his way home. Home? Home, to what? Where was his family? What in all the world could have happened? Were they ill, dead? No, they couldn't be!

The thirty sleepless nights dragged by, each one growing thicker with memories, each one placing more hideous thoughts of her disappearance into his clouded mind. If only he'd have heard something, anything. Was it the baby? Was it his son? Did something happen to *him*? He thought he would lose his mind if he didn't soon hear from her.

FINALLY, the day of his departure arrived. He sailed from Le Havre on the fourteenth of June, and seven days later arrived in New York. Again, a frantic call to a tiny, white, frame house in Virginia. Again, the same results . . . silence!

How could such a mix-up actually be taking place? Was it all possible? Was it a dream? He had to see for himself, to prove he hadn't lost his mind, to prove it wasn't his imagination that gave him a wife and son.

That same day, he stood before the home of all his dreams. How long he had waited to see it. How long he had waited to feel the warm arms of Laurie around his

neck, the warm touch of her soft lips pressed to his, the warm feeling of that first look at his son. None of these dreams greeted him. A cold, deserted house now stood before his weary eyes. It was empty!

"The neighbors," he thought. "That elderly couple across the street." Surely they would have some answer to this dreadful puzzle. They had to . . . but, they didn't! They left their home last year, after his journey across the Atlantic. The people living there now were absolute strangers to him.

TWO days of searching and questioning followed; then he found Laurie's father in a tiny tool shop on the opposite side of town. There, the two men sat for hours, one relating, one listening to the details that lead to the shattered heart of the woman they both so loved. Even now, as the broken husband knelt before his God, begging forgiveness, he could recite word for word the sentences of that aged man:

"It was your son," he began. "Two months ago, just before the letters stopped, it happened. Laurie was on the phone calling for an order of groceries. When she returned to the baby . . . yes . . . He had fallen from the bed and there was nothing anyone could do. I got there only minutes later and she was still lying on the floor, holding him tightly in her arms. She placed the entire blame for the tragedy on herself and there was nothing we could say to make

her realize that it wasn't her fault, and that you'd still love her without him. She said she had to get away, as far as she could, and that she'd never be able to face you again after taking from you the son you wanted so badly and never had seen. She said she'd never be able to forgive herself and that she didn't expect you to. I vowed never to tell a soul where she had gone or what she was doing, but now, I think you could help her greatly and once again give her the happiness you shared. She's in a little town in New Mexico, Las Cruces. My brother's been a missionary there for the past ten years, and I know she's been in good hands. Good luck, my son, and may God bring you together again."

WHERE was the priest? They told him to wait in the Church, that he'd be in to say his Mass at 6:30. The man glanced at his watch as the bells above slowly chimed the half hour. Two hidden lights clicked on over the altar, and a young, Mexican boy began to ignite the slim candles. Seconds later, a short, hobbling, grey-haired missionary walked to the altar, the server before him. It was Father Crawley! The description given to him fit the vested man perfectly, his walk, height, coloring; the deep, reddish-brown of his face and neck sharply contrasted the pure white of his garments, like the lone rose in a bouquet of lilies.

The dejected man now temporarily forgot his problem and con-

centrated on the solemn sacrifice being offered before him. How he prayed during that Mass. How he pleaded that Laurie was there, that she was all right, that she would forgive him.

It was entirely his fault, he now realized more than ever. During those six months, he placed all his love, all his devotion on the baby. In every letter, he'd ask about *him*, how he was, was he growing, did he look like his father, was he healthy and strong? How few times had he told his wife, his faithful, thoughtful wife, how proud he was of her, and the way she was raising their child. How few times had he told her of his love for her, of his love that grew to the peak of any earthly gift, of his love that was so cultivated by the possession of a son. Yes, how few times he made *her* feel the pride and importance of motherhood.

He gave her the impression that now his son was all that mattered, all he would ever care about. Of course, when the terrible, brutal shock of death struck, her only thought was the unhappiness it would bring to her husband. It was always that way. His well-being came first in her life, above everything else. She'd do anything to please him, anything to give him the felicity she thought he deserved, anything to save him from the pains of a childless marriage. How perfect she was, and how much he did love her.

The prayers continued in a whisper, in a quiet, hushed whis-

per, mingling with the Latin words of the priest, echoing from the dark walls of the Church. He was so close to his God, so near to His Excellence, so adjacent to His Greatness. "Yes," he thought. "Now I'm close to God; now I'm on my knees; now, when I want a favor, when I'm begging for happiness. How far was I only two months ago, when the thought of His help seemed so distant and unimportant. How far had I strayed when I didn't have a favor to ask."

He deeply believed and knew he didn't deserve to have her back. He was proud, selfish, foolish, and a woman of such perfection should not be his.

MASS ended. The priest and server walked slowly from the altar, into the sacristy and out of his sight. He waited! Should he see Father now? Did he dare face him and tell him who he was, and what he had caused by his ignorance? What would his reaction be? How would he accept the husband of his niece? Did he know where she was now?

He hesitated not another instant, quickly arose, genuflected and humbly walked into the musty sacristy. The priest was gone! Only the dark, ruffled Mexican youth stood before him, motionless, smiling, speaking. "Hello, sir." "Hello, Sonny," came the soft answer. "Where did Father go? Will he be back soon? Do you know where I can find him?"

"Sure. Just wait here and

I'll get 'im for you. Just take me a minute." He quickly hung the cassock and surplice in its place and walked out of the rear door.

The young man, realizing what loomed before him within the next few minutes, became frightened and extremely nervous. Again, he had to call on God for courage and strength. He entered the quiet church and bent his knees in prayer before the crucifix. The minutes slowly, painfully transformed the future into the present. The moment was arriving when he hoped for some definite word about his wife.

A slight, rustling sound from behind woke his expectant thoughts and startled the state of semi-consciousness he had fallen into. Was it the priest? The slow footsteps stopped, ten, fifteen pews behind him. Should he look around? No, he was the only other person in the Church and it would appear far too conspicuous. Again, he waited.

Then, the rule of his eager anticipation took complete control of his movements. He turned, slowly stepping into the aisle, slowly beginning to walk towards the open doors he entered so long ago.

A woman stood inside them. The light of the sun cast its gleam onto her back and prevented her facial features from being known. He moved towards her. She was short, slim, pale; and the silvery glisten of her hair reflected a solemn period of desperation. Closer he drew, more clearly her

identity became. A soft, tearful whisper broke the deathly silence . . . "Lauriē!"

For moments they stared, piercing the joyous depths of one another's souls, with sad eyes now enjoying the alteration to happiness. It was as if the light of glory was infused into their very

being, preparing them for a happiness they had not yet known. A gentle unity of two, quivering hands again joined the love that had proven stronger than the misconceptions or weaknesses of humanity.

The bells rang out their seventh hour.

The Hunter-Hound

Once upon a slug-wood stream,
Snarled snake-like in a wood,
Bat-blind stumbled I upon
(Ape-like for the close-weed bank)
Wound-down rabbit from the hunt.
Pity picked him from the weeds,
Gunning-mangled hunter's work.
Harsh-hound whining in the wood
Lost the prey-down, took that day,
Mammy-nursed him to the field.
We too, wound-down rabbits are,
Weed-lost in some tangled wood,
Pressed and depressed by the hound,
Running-weakened from the hunt,
Hunter's bag we seem to be.
Comes He then with groping arms;
Swiftly picks us from the weeds,
Fell-down prey is mammy-nursed,
Freed, Lord-lifted, leaves the hunt.
Vain hunts Nick, the Hunter-Hound.

—DONALD MOORMAN

by Anthony Smith

dimness that covered the yellow dance floor and the tables.

As the six of us talked and drank our beer at the bar, the front door opened and closed. Through the curtains that separated the small entryway from the bar, dance floor, and tables came a girl. She stood there near the green-black curtains for a minute shaking the beads of water from her silky brown raincoat. The

MARIA

I HAD observed her occasionally for six months, without seeing the truth until that last night, when it was too late. I think what first attracted me to her was that quiet, calm beauty that glowed forth from her and set the young woman far above the general sharp-brash-artificial beauty of the Corral's usual customers.

That first night had been a dreary wet one, and it was a Monday. Monday night never was busy at the Corral or any of the other clustering clubs that worked their way up the steep hill that was O'Leary street. It was 11:30; the juke-box blared forth from its corner; Ort, the bartender, was leaning, one elbow on the bar, and talking to the four members of the combo and myself. Three couples seemed to fade into the

check-room was closed so she carried the coat over her arm to the bar, slid onto a stool, and neatly folded her coat on the stool next to her. Her brown hair, wet from the rain, sparkled and shined from the colored light that illuminated the back-bar.

She smiled up at Ort, who had started to walk toward her. "Hi, Ort. Don't you remember me?"

Ort hesitated for a second, "Maria," he blurted, "where have you been keepin' yourself all these months? I haven't seen you since you got married."

That was all I heard. Ort lit a cigarette and began to talk quietly to Maria, as though she were a long lost sister.

The boys of the combo finished their beers and straggled toward the music stand to begin another

set of songs. I looked down the bar and saw Maria sitting there on that barstool like an eager kid. I couldn't help wondering what she was doing on a night like this by herself. Most of the girls that come into the Corral by themselves have a purpose. All they have to do is walk through those curtains and look around, and you know why they've come; it is stamped on them; it marks all

larger crowd that night. There were more couples at the tables around the dance floor, and the bar was half filled. At the small table by herself was Maria.

When Ort came back near me I motioned for him to come over. "What's the story," I asked, "with your girl friend Maria? She sure is a good looking girl."

"Yeah, she sure is." Ort agreed. "She started coming in here about

LAMPERT

their actions. But Maria was not that: her walk, her smile, the clear, unaffected way she called out to Ort. Her eyes glissened with the innocence of your best girl, of your wife.

THAT was the first time I saw Maria. The next time was an evening two weeks later when I walked into the Corral. She was sitting at one of the small tables for two that lined both sides of the low partition that separated the bar from the dance floor. I sat at the bar and ordered a beer. Ort set the beer and a glass in front of me.

"How are you to-night, Tom?"

Pretty good, Ort. How's yourself?"

He moved toward the end of the bar to fill an order for one of the waitresses. The place had a

a year ago. Usually she was with a couple of the girls, but sometimes she just would drop in by herself. She loved to dance and she was good at it. All of the time she had someone to dance with her and buy her a few drinks, but she always left the place by herself. I could never figure her out. A good looking girl like her could have kept four or five of these characters wrapped around her little finger. If she would of had some sense she could have them all supporting her."

Ort was called away to fill another order. The combo began to play a slow easy song. I turned around and Maria was still by herself. "Nothing like giving it a try," I thought. I slid off the stool and walked over to ask her for a dance. She smiled up from the

table and said, "Yes."

We danced and introduced ourselves. I spent the rest of the evening talking to her over that small table. She told me how she had met this wonderful sailor at the club here four months ago. She said she had loved him from the very first time she had danced with him. She told me he had been in the Navy for three years and would soon be discharged; how they were going to go back to his home in Kentucky and raise a family and be happy. Her father had told her to take off the engagement ring or get out of his house. She told me all of the details of the small quiet marriage in the court house, three and a half months ago. She told of their great unbounded love for each other; how 'her Bill' had rented a beautiful little apartment for her just before he had left on his last tour of duty three months ago.

As I sat at the table after Maria had left for her apartment I was ashamed of my reason for first asking Maria to dance. I had known from the first, deep down in me, that she wasn't the same as the others.

THAT was the second time I saw Maria. After that night she stopped in often, and we would dance and talk. She was the kind of woman that made you feel good just to be near her. She could make you feel that life was wonderful and beautiful; that everything was in order, and problems and worries were things that could never eat away your happiness.

Recently Maria came in more often. Each time she had only one or two drinks, danced, talked, and smiled that beautiful misty smile of hers. I should have guessed that something was bound to happen to her. Girls like Maria just don't stop in places like the Corral unless they have some kind of trouble.

I will never forget that last night. It was a Saturday, and the Corral was filled with people. The music played, spreading out from the combo and filling the place. The bar was crowded, and I was with a couple of the boys at one end of it. About ten o'clock I saw Maria, through the smoky haze, slip out of the crowd and take a seat at the other end of the bar. She ordered a drink.

The music streamed forth and the evening swept by. I danced with some of the women, and drank a little more than usual. By one o'clock the crowd had thinned out. It seemed almost peaceful again in the club. I sat there quietly and looked out over the dance floor. Out in the middle of the floor, clinging to a big, rough-looking hulk, was Maria. The music stopped and he led her back through the dimness to a table. Maria weaved a little and then forced her steps into a straight line. I ordered another beer from Ort, and wondered. Something had happened to me; my stomach had a hard, drawn feeling in it. To see Maria out there on the floor like that made me feel that life was a lie. A kid must have the

same feeling when he finds out there are no magic carpets or flashing knights in steel armor.

BACK in the corner I could see the big fellow holding Maria close to him. About two o'clock they left; he had his arm around Maria's slim beautiful waist to steady her toward the check room. As he helped her with her coat a piece of paper dropped from one of the pockets. Out through the curtains and into the cold, dark dampness of the night they went. That was the last time I saw Maria and her calm, quiet beauty.

After the curtains had closed and they were gone, I went over

by the checkroom and picked up the paper. It was an envelope addressed to Maria Lampert; the postmark was from someplace in Kentucky. In the envelope I saw the reason why Maria had been coming to the Corral. There was a short note in which Bill said he was sorry. There was also a copy of the divorce papers.

As I stood there in the quiet of the empty bar, I couldn't help from feeling sorry for the young innocent girl who had given everything to a man she loved. I walked through the curtains and out into the still dark street. Yes, Maria was gone.

The Contention

There's blood aglistening on the moon, my lads,
And aye, there's hint of battle in the air
As sets the young blood thrilling for the fight.
Let's up and to the battle field of life,
That stretches from the sun into the night.
And glisten shall our banners in the sun
Of higher motives, strong, and proud, and pure.
Our line is long, and firm, and confident;
So up! To ranks! Our Leader is the Lamb!
And though the fight is long and thick and fast,
And many stumble on the weary way,
We'll hold our ranks until the fight is done.
Then shall we feast in gilded, marble halls,
That line the Lordly manor of the Lamb.

—DONALD MOORMAN



Coup d'Etat at the



Opening Night at the Metropolitan

Met

by Joseph Barnett



Rudolf Bing

OBLIVIOUS to the noisy, rush-hour traffic on Broadway, an unimposing, partly bald man stepped from a black car on the overcast morning of June 1, 1950, and paused a moment on the curb, looking at the building before him with a purposeful expression that revealed he was undertaking the most momentous job of his life-long career. The building was the renowned Metropolitan Opera House, an institution which has come to crystallize the word opera in America. The man was the comparatively unknown Rudolf Bing, the new general manager who on that day in 1950 began his job which would at times label him as a bungler and at others as a brain-child.

Although he was far from a celebrity in America, Mr. Bing had already earned a name for himself in England and on the Continent. His whole life had been associated with the business side of opera. While still a young man in his native Vienna, he managed a small concert bureau where he worked for such notable performers as Lotte Lehmann, Fritz Busch, Eugene Ormandy, and Fritz Kreisler. At the age of twenty-nine he became artistic director of the Darmstadt State Theatre, from which two years later he advanced to the post of artistic administrator of the Berlin Municipal Theatre. Dismissed at the rise of the Nazi regime, Bing went to England, eventually helping to

plan and direct the famed Glyndebourne Festival. Having been closed during the war years, the festival reopened primarily because Bing had been successful in persuading Scotch businessmen to support Glyndebourne's associate, the Edinburgh Festival.

As manager of the Met, Mr. Bing found no prosperous and progressive company to greet him: the whole company was steeped in gas-light era traditions, the association was heavily in debt, the productions were hackneyed and antiquated, the repertoire was large and unskillfully handled, and the singers ruled the Met with a traditional sovereignty.

From the very beginning, Bing saw that in carrying out his program of modernizing the company and making opera a living art which would appeal to a new generation, he was handicapped by one ever-present item—the financial situation.

Says Bing, "The word art is seldom heard in this house. It is always money, money, money." He saw that every decision must be made by first considering the perilous economy of the deficit, which amounted to \$430,500 when he assumed control. In the Golden Age of the Metropolitan a deficit was unhandy but was not serious. Checks from several occupants of the boxes in the Diamond Horseshoe soon wiped out any financial need. Society, however, no longer underwrites the Met's deficits. As a result, Bing found that he must undertake a

radical but realistic program.

BING decided that the Met would no longer exist as a society fashion show set to music, an institution of, for, and by the wealthy. To prove this fact and to raise more money, Mr. Bing on his second opening night abandoned a society-favoring tradition and sold tickets on a "first-come-first-serve" basis, thus raising an extra \$53,100 since he had not included the opening night on the regular subscription series. To broaden the basis for public support even further, he planned to make the opera tickets more easily within the financial reach of the opera lovers by selling a book of nine tickets instead of the expensive book of eighteen.

Prior to Bing's management, the Board of Directors was not eager to advertise the financial plight by appealing to the public for funds. Such appeals had been voiced only three times—in 1933,

The "Met"



1934, and 1943. Mr. Bing, however, is a more realistic businessman; convinced that the Metropolitan is a national institution and should be supported on a national basis, he has twice appealed to the broad American public and to the Met's radio audience, in particular.

A thoroughly dynamic financier, Bing is rarely inhibited in his enthusiasm during a fund drive. During a 1953 Saturday afternoon broadcast, announcer Milton Cross had given his usual pre-curtain commentary, and the orchestra began the prelude to Act II of *Tristan and Isolde*. Suddenly there was silence: the orchestra had stopped playing; the curtain did not rise. Mr. Cross broke the long and pregnant silence over the loudspeaker. The silence, he explained, was designed to dramatize what would actually happen to the Met if sufficient funds were not raised: the opera house would cease to exist. Mr. Bing later agreed that such a demonstration perhaps was not fitting for the world's greatest opera house, "But," he added, "neither is a \$500,000 deficit."

In April, 1951, Bing tackled the financial doldrums in another way. In Washington the Metropolitan went to the House of Representatives' Ways and Means Committee to plead its case for tax exemption, arguing that since it is a non-profit organization, it should not pay the twenty percent Federal admissions tax. The net deficit of the 1949-50 season

was \$430,502; taxes collected that season amounted to \$460,988. With the eventual passage of the bill, the Met saw a way of substantially reducing its deficit, although Bing's new productions have also run up the amount of debt.

HAVING seen the effect radio has had of popularizing opera in America (an estimated 12 million listen to each Saturday's broadcast), Mr. Bing was quick to see the possibilities of television. With a source of income in mind, he established a special television department which would arrange special studio operatic productions for sale to commercial sponsors. *Die Fledermaus* and *La Boheme* were handled on such a nationwide program. Opening night has now become a yearly broadcast on closed-circuit channels.

Again with new sources of income in mind, Mr. Bing has undertaken another project at the Met. This year he announced plans for a proposed European tour, the first of its kind in recent years.

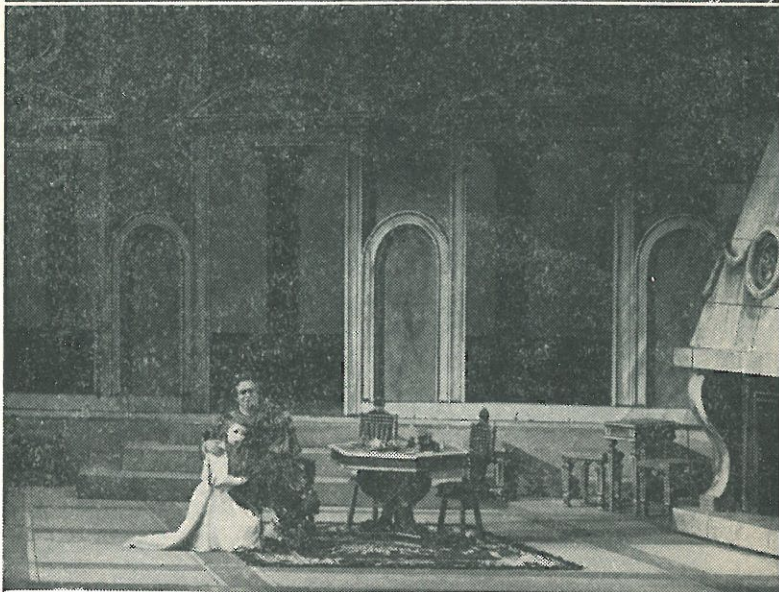
What may prove to be the biggest venture of Bing's career at the Met is the plan of the association to abandon the old location of the opera house and to construct a desperately needed new building in Lincoln Square.

When Bing arrived at the Met, he realized that something had to be done about the condition of the repertoire and stage productions. For decades the same productions of the old favorites had been pre-

Carmen



Rigoletto



Aida



sented. If Bing had any hopes of drawing bigger audiences, he would have to offer something new: he decided to begin a series of operas presented in English and to "overhaul" as many of the old productions as possible.

The first opera he ventured in English was Johann Strauss' gay, bubbling *Die Fledermaus*. This proved so successful that Bing made it the pivot of this 1950-51 season to "buy time for the production of other works." As a result he scheduled it sixteen times—more performances for one opera than any other in one season's history at the Met. Bing followed this one with translations of *Così fan Tutte*, *Fidelio*, *Gianni Schicci*, *Bohème*, *Boris Godunov*, and *The Magic Flute*.

Mr. Bing also attempted to settle another perennial musical controversy: opera in English *versus* opera in the original language. For a test case, he selected Howard Dietz to write an English version of *La Bohème*. Bing also scheduled several performances of the same opera in its customary Italian so that the critics could judge the two side by side. The dual-language performances made two facts apparent: the older text was definitely aged and it did no longer "sing"; it also showed that when an English translation is made, it must not merely express the basic ideas in suitable verse; it must also carry over the whole mood of the opera. Such was not the case with *Bohème*.

To Bing the paradox of the Met is the fact that despite the old sets and old costumes, stand-bys such as *Traviata* and *Carmen* still sell out the house. His task, he concluded, is to get the public to clamor for new and better productions of these favorites so that the Board of Directors will approve these expensive ventures, each new production costing between \$50,000 and \$70,000.

While observing the company before he took over, Bing was horrified to see the extremely low standard of operas at the Met: wigs habitually came loose, scenery swayed gently in the Seventh Avenue breeze, and the acting was melodramatic.

Bing quickly set out to remedy this situation. For his first opening night hit, *Don Carlo*, and his subsequent revival of the *Flying Dutchman*, Bing established his precedent of looking to Broadway for talent. These two operas were designed by Robert Edmond Jones, writer of *The Iceman Cometh*. Seeing what success professional talent can achieve, he went even further. He opened his second season with a lively, spectacular *Aida*. New sets and costumes had been created by Rolf Gerard, theatre designer (*Caesar and Cleopatra*). Mr. Gerard did a considerable amount of research in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in order to get authentic styles and colors. In *Aida* his towering architecture was done in neutral desert tones to accent the brilliant cos-

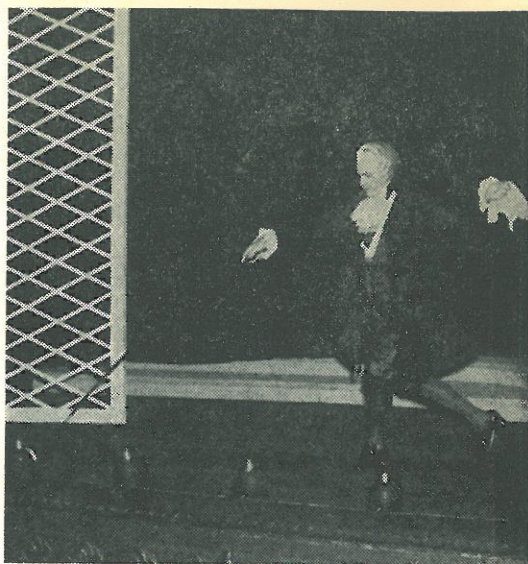
tumes. Later Mr. Gerard turned the often gaudy, unrealistic *Carmen* into a magnificent production in which the settings accentuated the "sinister, ominous, malevolent air of the tragedy."

Eugene Berman, a painter and ballet designer, devised a Renaissance extravaganza in *Rigoletto*. His sets satisfied convention without slurring modernity. His solid 15th century Italian ducal city glowed with faded pink marble and magnificent period interiors; his costumes splashed with color.

Bing's pet, *Fledermaus* was staged by Garson Kanin, the Hollywood and Broadway writer and director. With the help of lyricist Howard Dietz, Kanin made the new libretto sparkle. Mr. Gerard designed and costumed the production. For his dual production of *Bobeme*, Bing hired the famous film director Joseph Mankiewicz.

For *Aida* Bing also commissioned new staging and hired Margaret Webster. To help Miss Webster in her job, Bing insisted that the formerly supreme conductor work almost as equals with her.

FOR the revival of *Così Fan Tutte*, Mr. Bing succeeded in getting Alfred Lunt to come to the Met as stage director. Lunt made two debuts in the comic opera—a debut as an operatic stage director and, in keeping with the gaiety of the performance, a debut as an actor on the hallowed stage at the Metropolitan: when the curtain rose on the opera's opening night, Mr. Lunt himself pranced out onto the stage in ma-



Alfred Lunt

roon velvet livery and a powdered wig. He cleared his throat authoritatively, waved several latecomers to their seats, then went through the act of lighting a row of electric "gas" footlights with a long taper, all to great applause. Bing, had thus succeeded in getting not only realistic and modern productions; he had also finally begun to banish the ghosts of formalism that hung over the Met.

With Bing also came new ballet. To get fresh ideas on the subject, he hired Zachary Solov, one of the leading figures in contemporary American ballet. Solov devised new dances for *Aida*, *Rigoletto*, *Carmen*, *Fledermaus*, and *Così*. In *Aida*, for example, cutting the ballet known as the dance of the Blackamoors (girls in dark make-up), he decided to have six men grab some of the princess'



Roberta Peters



Rise Stevens

slave girls and have, what he termed a "little whooped-up sex dance" which he thought would better depict Egyptian court life than a formalized eighteenth century Italian dance.

Another great problem facing Bing when he arrived at the Met was that of the singers. It had become the pastime practice of important stars, when they weren't singing during an opera, to try to attract the attention of the audience by means of antics, thus ruining the effect of the scene and putting the other singers at a tremendous disadvantage. Bing clearly demanded quality of acting as well as of singing from his stars; he also preached that a simple understanding of the motives and sentiments implied in the text will do wonders toward creating a convincing characterization.

BING has often asserted that the future of the Metropolitan

must be built on American stars. The Met's leading singers are no longer imported from Europe. Jan Peerce, Richard Tucker, Rise Stevens, Patrice Munsel, Roberta Peters, Robert Merrill, Blanche Thebom, and Jerome Hines are just a few of the Americans on the roster, all showing that Americans definitely take the lead at the Met.

Mr. Bing found his relations with some of the stars a bit strained. Formerly the singers had been the "gods of the opera house," but with Bing, "The Met comes first!" He insists that the singers perform a minimum of ten weeks during the season and also be on hand for rehearsals. Through Bing's persistence, stars who used to drop in a mere four or five times a year now turn down more profitable concert and radio appearances to sing at the Met.

Only after long negotiations, Bing persuaded the famous but



Eugene Conley



Robert Merrill

expensively temperamental Maria Callas to make her debut at the Met in the 1956 season. Although the soprano, formerly the star of Chicago's Lyric Theatre, once boasted that she didn't need the Met, nonetheless the prestige and accompanying bargaining power that goes with the Met finally prompted her to sign with Bing.

All of Bing's problems with the stars have not ended so happily. Some of the "Old Guard" at the Met would not allow the new manager to dictate to them. The leading Wagnerian tenor Lauritz Melchior ended his twenty-four years with the Met because he felt he would have "to play second fiddle under the new regime." Helen Traubel also fell under Mr. Bing's axe for failing to maintain a respectable concert career and, instead, playing the night club circuit.

Bing's policy toward tempera-

mental stars is firmness—sympathy but firmness. This firmness does not lack wit, however; before one performance, Bing suspected that the "illness" of one of his tenors was chiefly laziness. He therefore rushed two doctors and an ambulance to the tenor's door in burlesque solicitude. The tenor sang that evening.

In order to achieve his high goals at the Metropolitan, Bing spends twelve hours daily at the opera house and keeps his fingers on every phase of the Met's activity. He looks in on every performance and has a direct phone from his box to give on-the-spot directions backstage; but with a grin, he says that he thinks someone has disconnected it: "No one ever answers."

EVEN though he has made a few enemies in the course of his seemingly radical changes, on the whole Bing has captured the

hearts of his co-workers at the Met. Never before had any manager received so jovial an accolade as did Bing during the 1950 New Year's Eve performance of *Fledermaus*, when Rise Stevens, tem-

porarily abandoning her role of Prince Orlofsky, strutted center stage, put one foot on the prompter's box, pointed with a gigantic cigarette holder to the embarrassed Bing in Box 23, and sang a parody of her regular song:

*The opera that must be your
choice*

*If you like plays that sing
Are solely dependent on one voice,
The voice of Rudolf Bing.*

*If he is in a Wagnerian mood
We're forced to strain a lung
And serve the ponderous musical
food*

*of Gotterdammerung . . .
Mister Bing is the king uncrowned
here*

*Though he rarely is on view,
And we do
Just what Bing
Tell us to.*

*The expression is never found here
Chacon a Son Gout.**

*There is only one gout around
here,
And you all know who!*

**Chacon a Son Gout*: the title of the opera's regular song, which means "Everyone to his own taste."

THE MYSTERY OF THE WHEELS

by
Donald
Moorman

"DONNIE, you come right back here!" Bang! the screen door slapped its frame soundly and the rapid slap, slap of small leather shoes on the pavement echoed away down the street towards the train yards. Our mother stood in the doorway, silhouetted by the sun, streaming in through the front door. She smiled slightly and went back to her work.

"Yes," she thought, "it is dangerous, letting them play near the trains, but after all, they are boys, healthy boys, it's not much wonder. O course they will get a good licking for it when their dad comes home, since they have been disobedient again."

We did get the licking. We always got a licking, and a good sound one whenever we went to the train yards to play. Yet, there was seldom a day passed, that we didn't ride the "Dinky" as we called the old steam powered switch engine that puffed into town each day, promptly at four, except when the snow got too deep. It was an insistent desire, a deep longing, that would hear of no dissent. We had to ride on that train; we had to wave back to the engineer and fireman as they pulled into town at four, and we had to wave to them again as

they pulled out at five. The mystery of the wheels, of the wheeled monster, gripped us. It had every other boy in town in its grip too, and it was small wonder that the rail yard became our favorite hangout. It was there, in a shack we had all helped to build, that the youth of the town was usually to be found. Lucky were those few lads whose parents were so lackadaisical as to allow them to play in the train yards. This invariably led them to sleep, eat, and very nearly live there in the shack, hunting birds all morning with their air-rifles, and waiting for the train the entire afternoon, much to the envy of the rest of us. It was a grand life, living near the trains.

We have often been told that there was a time when there were no trains, no silver and black giants stalking in and out of town, coughing and spluttering. We find it hard to believe. What did the children of the neighborhood do? Were there no engineers to wave at, no cars to hop a ride on? Their life must indeed have been of the dullest nature. Some people seem to think that Indians, wild animals, and the like, took all the spare time the people had. Yet, we find it hard to believe that they really lived a full life, a complete and satisfying life, without trains to thrill at in their youth. Perhaps they were thrilled when they felt the earth quake beneath the flying feet of a buffalo herd; perhaps they shivered when they heard the shrill scream of a Comanche or

Shawnee. To a modern, railroad-minded youth, these things must seem a good deal like playing store or school. No doubt the earth did tremble when a herd of great bison flew past, but the trembling of the ground, and the rumble of their feet must have made in passing, surely sounded like the trickling of some summer waterfall, sleeping lazily in the shade, and the shriek of the Comanche must truly have sounded as sweet as the singing of the meadow lark in a summer's meadow when one compares them to the earth-shattering roar of the midnight express tearing its mad way riotously through the night, and the hideous, nerve-tingling scream of the steam whistle shrieking wildly, like some hundreds of eagles, in the gloom and calm of the evening. The wheezing engine, lying snakelike in the station, would terrify even the Comanche himself, and the buffalo herd would hang its head in shame that its noise was so piteous.

THE youth of today have a great advantage over the early days of their great grandfathers. They possess trains, or rather, they are possessed by trains. The train is not a gigantic hauler of merchandise to the young boy, nor is it some great mechanical phenomenon to be wondered at. The train is a living, struggling, breathless animal, a pet, to the little bands of boys daily seen waving to the engineer and fireman, just as it was once a living, struggling, breathless animal to the fireman and en-

gineer when they stood where the youth of today stand now. The train is not always appreciated by the older people of the community, who consider it a great disadvantage to have one of these great, groaning giants within a dozen blocks of their home. Yet their children would be all too pleased if the railroad would lease the corridor between the front door and the back door, and would run a spur line, or preferably, a main line directly through the living room. This is not wise? We will admit it to be a bit impractical, but remember, "Out of the mouths of babes, oft times . . ."

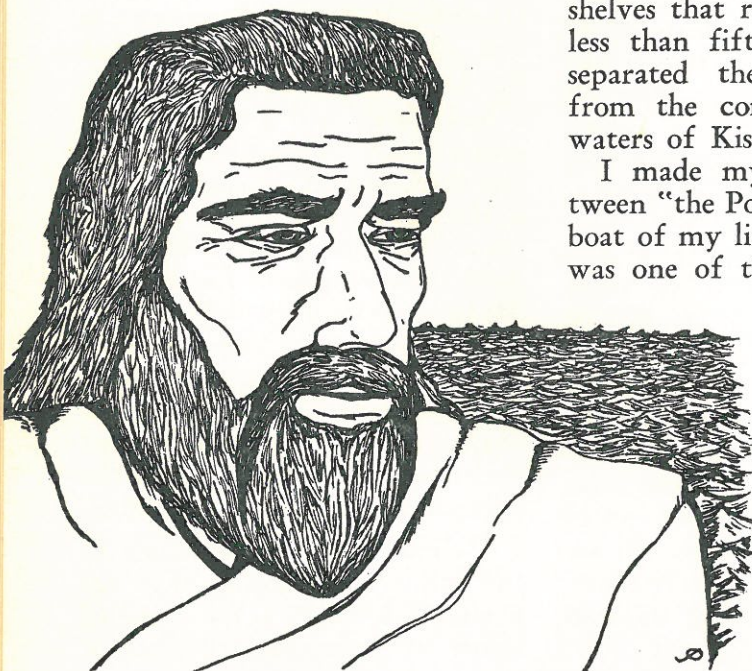
Trains are closely watched by poets, painters, and musicians. They are pure inspiration to an observant eye and mind. The poet rightly says that entering the country the train gathers mystery. Two straight rails bending away in the distance to the north, to the south, stretching off into the rising and setting suns, spreading across the great continents like some gigantic spider web of steel. Rails, fascinating in the sun of midafternoon, mysterious in the pallid light of the March moon; rails carrying the commerce of a mighty nation; rushing trains, pounding madly across the backs of two slivers of steel; trains rac-

ing, panting, screaming, enrap-ture the artist with every point, every slight detail of their make-up.

TRUDGING home, long after the Four O'clock had pulled out, we could see our mother standing in the doorway, smiling when she did not think we were looking. Long after the sting of the paddle had worn off, long after we had entered school and graduated, long after we had even stopped going to the train yards, the memory of the great complaining engine, tugging tirelessly at its cars remained fresh in our mind. It is too bad that we can no longer see the black smoke of the engine disappear around the bend, nor hear the engineer send one last, long blast on his whistle back to us, to let us know he will return again, and that we should be there to meet him when he does. We can still hear the daily trains if we will only stop and listen for them. They are still blowing good-byes to little groups of boys standing along the tracks. And if we would but look in the right places, we could again see the secret smile of our mother, standing alone in the doorway, as we trudged home to our spanking, tired, but filled with the awe and majesty of the mystery of the wheels, and the giant Titan of the rails, the train.

THE RETURN

by Joseph Kneip



THE village of Kista lies on the northernmost shore of Newfoundland. Its three dozen cabins are thrown loosely about the edge of a narrow, crooked finger of the Atlantic that has cut its way for perhaps a quarter of a mile into the desolate coastline. Roughly hewn fishing wharves line the inlet on either side providing bases for the numerous boats bobbing on the rough waters. Behind the shacks stretch the lonely wastes of Newfoundland, mile after mile of nothing, an impenetrable wilderness.

The only entrance to the inlet and, likewise, the only possible way of reaching the village was between "the Points," as the villagers called them, two jagged shelves that rose from the water less than fifty yards apart and separated the stormy Atlantic from the comparatively calmer waters of Kista's harbor.

I made my first passage between "the Points" on the fishing boat of my life-long friend, who was one of the stalwart inhabitants of the village. He had met me at the end of the railway line, and we had spent twenty-four hours on his sturdy little boat, hugging the coastline and fighting our way northward

through the Atlantic to Kista. I had left a novel half-finished in Boston and had come at my friend's summons to study the phenomenon of the man Yord.

As we passed through "the Points" after our struggle up the coast, my friend took my arm and pointed to the northern shoreline. At the summit of a rocky slope, rising from the Atlantic on one side and the inlet on the other, stood a weather-beaten cabin, almost obscure in the fog that drifted along the coastline.

This, my friend told me, was the cabin of Yord.

To a novelist such as myself, the setting seemed to match perfectly all I had heard about the strange man. He was almost a legend in this far-flung country, a man of tremendous stature, without a past, who had lived by the sea and seemed almost part of the sea. The people of Kista saw him only at rare intervals near his cabin. He never came to the village for supplies, always keeping to himself. No one had ever heard him speak.

Yet the people of Kista were not the only ones who saw Yord. The strange people from the northern regions, on their infrequent trips south, mentioned the sight of the Kista giant sailing his great black fishing boat off the shores of their villages. And other fishermen, blown far out to sea by Atlantic gales, often reported seeing Yord sailing through the heart of the storm, seemingly unaware of their presence.

And so the legend of the man Yord grew until he was known in every village in northern Newfoundland. And my friend, knowing my interest in such matters as these, had quickly summoned me to Kista to view the strange man firsthand.

MY first week in Kista was uneventful, and I learned little of the strange giant from any of the villagers. If I acquired anything at all from my conversations with the people, it was a strengthening of my conviction that if all the reports of this strange man were true, there was something unreal about Yord. For each person I talked to expressed little knowledge, little understanding, but great fear of the man.

Yet if my opinion was strengthened in my mind by the people's attitudes, it was made positive a few days later when I visited Yord's cabin.

Since little was known of my subject with which I had become rapidly fascinated, I decided a trip to the lonely cabin might give me the information I desired. I picked an early evening hour for my visit for two reasons. I knew Yord fished on the open sea every evening and would take advantage of the changing tide to put out in his boat, as did the other fishermen of the village. Also, I didn't want the villagers to know of my prowling.

I climbed the steep ascent to the cabin after noting that the great black boat was not fastened below in the customary place at

Yord's wharf, and boldly approached the cabin.

MY first impression was one of uneasiness as I stood upon the rocky heights watching the wind whip the fog about the cabin. My feelings, however, soon changed to curiosity as I viewed the structure before me. Its design was completely unfamiliar to me. It resembled no cabin I had ever seen before and in no way resembled the other cabins of Kista. It was rudely constructed of uneven logs, notched at the ends for support, and bound seemingly with vines in some places and strips of animal skins in other places. The roof slanted to one side and seemed to be strips of sod placed in a patchwork design. The entrance was small and barred only by the skin of some large animal that hung to the ground covering the opening. There were no windows.

Upon pushing back the door covering and entering, it seemed I had stepped into another world. A greasy candle, floating in some type of oil, half-lighted the room and showed only a rude table of split logs and a pile of branches scattered as to make a primitive bed. A closer inspection revealed only a few scattered garments of strange variety and some food-stuff cast in a pile in the corner.

As I turned to leave, a strange sight presented itself. Against the wall near the door lay a headress familiar to all who have studied history. It was the fur-covered headpiece of the Norsemen, com-

plete with shining horns protruding from either side. Near this I found an odd knife, covered with strange symbols, and another horn, larger than those on the headress, complete with a leather thong. All of these strange objects seemed to be immeasurably old, though in excellent state of preservation as if someone had cared for them almost daily.

My thoughts were suddenly interrupted by the bumping sound of wood on wood, and I knew that Yord had returned. I quickly slipped out of the opening and secured myself in the bushes nearby just as Yord came up the path from the wharf and entered the cabin. I caught only a glimpse of him as he passed, but it was enough to assure me that what I had heard of his great size was no exaggeration.

DETERMINED to learn everything possible about the strange man, I slipped gently down the path and boarded his strange craft. I had moved to the rear of the boat and was looking in vain for an auxiliary motor when I noticed that the craft was not at all similar to the others of the village.

It was larger than the others, some thirty feet in length, with a single mast rising approximately from the center. It seemed to be made by hand of the same rough construction that marked the cabin. The logs of the vessel were notched as those of the cabin and were somehow stained black on

the outside. The nets, hanging limply on one side, were obviously hand-woven and hand-patched. There were no modern implements on board, and the whole affair had a primitive air about it.

So engrossed was I in the strange black craft of Yord, that his footsteps at the other end of the wharf was my first warning of his approach. I overcame my fears in an instant and silently slipped behind a canvas piled near the rear of the boat. The evening was rapidly fading and in the gloom that seemed to be a product of the dusk and the fog, I was almost invisible.

My hiding place blocked me from Yord's vision, but it also kept me from seeing him and I had no idea what to expect until suddenly I was aware of movement and fear crowded upon me as I felt the force of the waves grow stronger and realized we were heading for the open sea.

For the seeming unending period of time, I remained in my place of concealment until cramped and drenched by the high-breaking waves, I could stand the suspense no longer and threw over the canvas.

The giant was in the rear of the boat, less than three yards from me. And yet, even with the noises the canvas had made, he seemed unaware of my presence. He was staring past me, his eyes squinted as if looking for something far in the distance. For the first time, I was aware of the gigantic size of

the man. He stood at least six and a half feet high and weighed more than three hundred pounds. He was dressed in rough seaman's clothing and his head and the greater part of his face was covered by long shaggy, yellow hair. His one hand rested lightly on the tiller of the boat and the other was wrapped tightly around the strange horn I had seen earlier in his cabin.

I stood motionless for several minutes staring at this giant before me, transfixed by his awesome appearance and baffled by his inability to see me.

I believe I would have remained motionless indefinitely had he not slowly become aware of my presence. Slowly, in the manner of someone rousing from a deep sleep, he focused his eyes upon me, then motioned me to his side.

As I stumbled to obey his command, he swept his arm over the dark expanse of Atlantic to the east of the boat, muttered something in a language I had never heard before, and indicated that I should watch the waters. He then turned to the west and resumed the vigil I had interrupted.

And so the night passed in searching, searching for something in the darkness of the northern Atlantic, while the wind blew the waves about the boat and buried us both in clouds of spray. My fears had resided somewhat after a time and on several occasions I spoke to my fellow watcher but received no reply, so intent was

his search.

Only one series of incidents broke the spell of the lonely watching. At regular intervals, Yord would raise the horn to his lips and blow a weird call across the tossing waves, then wait as if listening for a reply. But no reply came.

There was loneliness and desolation about this man that became more evident as dawn approached. His great agitation could be sensed yet he never showed emotion of any kind. Even his huge bulk thrown against the northern Atlantic seemed pitifully small and ineffective. A feeling nearer to sympathy than fear filled me as we headed back to Kista. Yet even the terrifying experience of the night had not lessened my desire to learn the secret of this man. I felt that if I could learn what it was he was searching for, the secret would be revealed.

MY companion ignored me completely as we returned to Kista and upon arriving at his wharf, he secured the boat and at once climbed the path to his cabin, leaving me no choice but to return to the village.

My host was frantic when I returned but a manufactured explanation put him at ease. I gave him no knowledge of the wild night nor of what I had learned of Yord.

I was quite undecided as to what my next move would be, when storm warnings flashed up and down the coast, and Kista busied itself in making things se-

cure for the big blow. The storm struck late one afternoon, just a week following my strange sail with Yord, and though I had seen Atlantic storms before, I had not expected half of what lashed Kista for the following forty-eight hours. The entire harbor seemed to remain in twilight for the entire two days, and the winds tore at every building and every rock as if wishing to rip apart the entire area. Rain fell in torrents and all residents were necessarily confined to their cabins to listen to the pounding of the waves and wait patiently until the storm would subside.

During the second night of the storm while my friend and I were engaged in a conversation that had long since become boring to both of us, we heard a call above the wailing winds that blended with them and yet was entirely distinct. It came again and again, and each time, louder than before. Neither of us could guess its origin until the final call raced through the harbor on the winds and re-echoed from hill to hill. Then, the stormy night with Yord filled my mind and I recognized the call of the strange horn, almost the same pitch as that of Yord's. A thousand thoughts flooded my mind as I raced to the window and looked toward "the Points". I could see nothing. The darkness and rain blotted out everything before my eyes.

NEITHER my friend nor I slept that night, as my agitation kept both awake. And in the mor-

ning, when the storm had lifted, the village buzzed with talk of the strange calls. We saw that Yord's boat was no longer at his wharf. A fisherman, braving the storm to check the moorings of his boat, claimed to have seen the black craft heading for the open sea shortly after the mysterious calls had been heard. And though the man couldn't be sure, he seemed to see a larger vessel waiting just belond "the Points". His view, however, was quickly obscured by the storm and he had returned to his fireplace leaving the mystery to be settled in the morning.

I returned to Yord's cabin that morning and found that Yord had indeed departed. Nothing was missing but the strange headress, knife and horn that I had found before, and a thorough search of the cabin seemed to prove my idea that Yord had taken these implements with him.

I felt then that I would never see the strange giant again and that his mystery would never be solved. I was right in my first conclusion for Yord was never seen again at Kista or anywhere else in the northern Atlantic. His boat was found drifting amilessly miles

south of Kista a few days later, but no trace of the giant was ever found.

I never forgot the strange man of Kista and though soon after the storm I returned to Boston, the matter remained on my mind. It wasn't until recently, while doing research for a novel that I stumbled across what might be the beginning of the answer to the mystery of Yord.

In a book on ancient Viking history, there is a story of seven tribal chieftains, half-men, half-gods, who banded themselves with the great son of Eric the Red and sailed toward the west approximately during the year one thousand. Record's claim that Eric's son, Leif, returned from a wonderful place which he called "Vinland". And there are also records from Lief Ericson's own journal of the seven chieftains who, upon arriving at "Vinland", decided not to return, but to continue westward, vowing that if separated, all would search the sea and none would return nor rest until all were united. The book lists the seven chieftains: Thoralf, Skoll, Rogg, Bohr, Gundagg, Wulf, YORD.

I STUMBLED along the dusty highway, fatigued, hungry, and desperate for a place to rest. I never realized the state of Nebraska was so utterly deserted and disgustingly dry until now, the end of my first day on the road, the end of my first day as a deserter from the United States Army.

I simply had to find a home, or

There was no answer. I glanced through the screen, pressing my face to it and laying my only bag aside. I could see the source of the smoke. A coffee-pot stood on the stove, and the overflowing, boiling droplets hissed as each one hit the tongues of flame. There was no other sound.

I called to the person I knew

THE SECRET

farm, or shelter of some kind, soon. My legs were weakening and my parched lips becoming more and more dry with each painful step. I could walk only a little further. Then, as if my thoughts were miraculously read and answered, the white shingles of a small house slowly came into clear view as I reached the peak of a slight hill. Was it merely the workings of my eager imagination? No, it was a house. I could easily see now the tiny stream of smoke flowing from the leaning stack, the front bumper of a car parked behind a wooden shed, the frightened chickens scattering as my approaching steps brushed pebbles of gravel before me.

I cautiously stepped onto the porch and knocked lightly on the screen door that opened further with each touch of my knuckles.

had to be there. "Is anybody home? Hello there! Hello!" Still no answer. Where in the devil was everybody? Why didn't they answer when I called? My thoughts were abruptly interrupted by a harsh, deep, male voice behind me. "What can I do for ya?" it asked. I turned around to stare into the sunken eyes of a crippled, aged man, leaning on a short cane and chewing violently on his empty gums. By the sound of the voice, I had pictured a person entirely different. My delayed answer to him must have clearly indicated the surprise that was mine. Before I could utter a word, he walked across the room, pulled out a chair, and politely offered me the seat.

AGAIN he spoke. "Where ya from? Around here? Whatcha doin' about this lousy road at this

time of day?" I couldn't speak. I didn't know what to say, whether to tell him the truth or to think up some false story for my presence here. I quickly figured and decided that if he had been good enough to offer me the hospitality of his home, the least I could now do would be to tell him the true reasons for my unusual predicament. I tried to explain as completely and fully as I could my hatred for the Army and the first eight weeks I already spent in it. "It's the greatest waste of time I've ever seen," I began. "There's nothing I hated more than those

of sarcasm mingled with a tinge of sympathy. He slowly arose from the chair, walked across the room, returned with the fresh coffee, and settled again in the wobbly rocker beside me. "Help yourself," he told me. "Drink all you want and make yourself as comfortable as you can. You may as well spend the night here 'cause it's too late and dark for you to leave now."

I very willingly accepted his offer and agreed to call it a day.

"Well, I guess we may as well introduce ourselves," I said. "My name's Linden, Ed Linden."

DESERTER

Frank Unger

weeks of nightmare, those weeks of senseless torture and fatigue. I just couldn't take it any longer. I had to get out before it ruined me the way it has so many other fellas. You can understand the way I feel, can't you? There is no reason for all those guys to be in there wasting two good years of their lives. I just can't see it!"

The old man stared at me for some time without saying a word, without making the slightest movement. Then, a smile forced itself from his wrinkled lips. It was a smile like I had never before seen and one which possessed a bit

"Mine's Joe Wilford," the aged voice replied. We reached across the table and shook hands.

"You've sure got a lot to learn, young man. How old are you?" I was a bit puzzled by his change in attitude and couldn't quite understand what he meant. I told him I had just turned twenty-one a month ago and asked him what he meant by his remark.

"WHEN ya get to be my age," he proceeded to explain, "ya look back over your youth and see how silly some of the things you did really are. I'm ninety-four years old now, pretty surprise'n,

huh, and I can realize what crazy thoughts go through a young man's mind. You say you hate the Army, that you can't understand why you should be in at a time like this. Did you ever study the history of your country, son? I'm sure you did, and I'm sure you also appreciated what went into building it. Did you ever stop to think of how many men were killed in building it to the strong thing it is now? Did you ever stop to think over how old this Army you hate really is? Did you ever stop to count these years of foundation and even get a close guess on the lives lost? You said you thought it was a 'senseless torture and fatigue.' I only wish you could've been in this same Army during the days when it was really a torture. Then you would've realized how easy you guys have it now. I fought for our Army when I was only fifteen years old. What do you think you and your buddies would've said to that? Would you have called that senseless and unimportant? Would you have deserted then?" The man went on, making me feel smaller and smaller with each word he said, making me wonder if I was right in doing what I did.

"How would you have enjoyed fighting a horde of wild, crazed Indians outnumbering you ten to one? You knew they weren't at fault, but yet you were told that if you couldn't stop them your own family might be killed and massacred, so you shot 'em. It wasn't much fun, Ed. Believe me,

it wasn't much fun sitting behind a rock, eating the dirt and dust of the country you were trying to build and preserve, killing the people whose ancestors lived here before a white man had ever touched American soil. No, it sure wasn't much fun, yet I don't think I ever once heard a soldier gripe or groan that it was a waste of time. What if all those men, the living and the dead, could be here right now, standing in front of you with their clothes torn and tattered by Indian arrows, their rifles leaning on their shoulders; would you be able to tell them what you've just told me? Would you be able to tell them that the Army was too rough for you, that you thought there was no sense in being a part of it?" I humbly answered that I couldn't do it.

"No, I can't understand the way you feel. I can't understand that you can sit there with a clear conscience, knowing that all those other men may feel just as badly at leaving their homes and families, but still they serve their country 'cause they know it's their duty. I gotta say one thing in your favor. I know there's no war on now and it does seem a bit remote to be so well prepared at this time; but can't you see that if a war did break out we'd have to be ready, and all the responsibility of saving our country would rest on you and your buddies' shoulders? Those fellow soldiers of yours. You say some of them were ruined by the Army. Don't you honestly think it was their own fault? If

you go into something with the idea that it's a waste of time and you know it's going to defeat you, you're bound to suffer and end up with a failure far worse than you ever expected. If I were you and I was in the position you're now in, I'd get back to that base as fast as I could and forget I ever had any notions of desertion. You've still got a 'day of grace', haven't you?"

"Yes," I quietly replied. "I've still got 'till tomorrow before I'm considered AWOL."

"Then get movin' first thing in the mornin' and no harm will be done by this crazy attitude you've taken." The slowly uttered words of the shocked man ordered me, as I held my head in my hands and finally realized that all he said was true.

WHEN I awoke the following morning I heard the voices of two people, the familiar, deep one, and a female, sweet one. What were they discussing so quietly? I listened closely and carefully to each word said. I gathered the woman was his wife as she asked him all about me. Then, she whispered,

"Didn't you tell him about Custer?" "No," he replied. "That would've ruined everything. I only wish someone would have taken me aside before that battle and told me the things I had to learn the hard way over all these years. If they had, maybe I wouldn't have run out on all my friends. I've tried to save him from living all his life with desertion on his conscience the way I have, and I sure hope I succeeded. It's a horrible thing to live with and I wouldn't wish it on my worst enemy. Of course, Emmy, if I would've stayed I never would have been here now. Guess maybe . . . nope, I'm still sure I did the wrong thing."

I quickly dressed, ate a wonderfully prepared breakfast, and was on my way. Before I left, I thanked the great, old man for all he had done for me and told him there was no possible way for me to show my true appreciation. I waved goodbye to the ancient couple as they stood on the porch, arm in arm, smiles of proud victors covering each of their faces. The secret was still theirs.

MISTER Peron, of recent Argentinian memory, had among other pastimes, a fondness for marble, especially when it was hacked, chipped, or otherwise sculptured to resemble himself or his wife. Such a liking of likenesses is in itself not too uncommon nor ignoble. But it seems that Mr. Peron, always one of action, went one step further than a mere fondness. To make certain future Argentines would remember both him and his fondness for Peronese statuary, he commissioned a number of these statues to be erected in Buenos Aires in prominent places.

Year after year Mr. Peron resided happily in the Presidential Palace; week after week he gazed happily around the capital city and admired his statues; day after day more statues were unveiled throughout the city; hour after hour, however the Argentines, art lovers as they may be, grew more and more weary of the same sight—Mr. Peron. If their president had not been as reasonably pleasant-looking as he was, the situation would have crisised even sooner. Eventually the people could stand no more: came the revolution.

After a few bombs and bullets, Mr. President hurriedly left Ar-

gentina. Rushed as he was under the circumstances, he could take only very few possessions with him. In the rush he forgot his marble statues. Embarrassingly, for the new regime, the great marble face of Mr. Peron continued to gaze about the city—from pedestals, niches, and building-tops. The administration decided that the statues had to go!

But tons of marble presented a

problem: Could the statues be re-chiseled to resemble the new president? The new executive, however, is several sizes larger, thus handicap-



ping the proposal at the onset. Might the figures be hacked down into little round marbles and distributed to the wee Argentines for playing games? Sound as this proposal appeared, it was found to be multi-defective. There is an unbelievable amount of waste of material in making round marbles, and square ones are deemed altogether impractical. Furthermore, to date, the little Argentines have never heard of playing marbles, thus necessitating an intensive program of youth recreation education.

An artistically-minded cabinet minister at last solved the crisis by proposing that the statues be cut into square blocks of marble to

be used by young, fledgling sculptors. His motion passed with as much unanimity as is possible in South American politics.

Thus ended the weighty problem. The new regime is happy, the populace, weary of seeing Peron in marble, is happy, the art students, hacking at their new blocks, are happy.

Into this picture of happiness, however, creeps a single sad element. In far-away Italy dwells a sculptor named Leone Tommasi. Normally uninterested in and unaffected by world crises, especially those in Argentina, Leone found himself with precisely the same problem—a surplus of marble. Leone was the ill-commissioned artist chosen by Mr. Peron to produce a 450 foot monument depicting Peron and his wife. Eva alone was to be fifty-three feet high, thus dwarfing all earlier statues. For five years Mr. Tommasi had hacked tirelessly, oblivious to political trends in South America. Eva's and Juan's statues neared completion. But then came the revolution.

Leone now has a thirty ton hulk of white marble, representing an astounding overhead expense. The new Argentine government has officially informed the sculptor that it has no intention of paying for this unwanted monument.

Mr. Tommasi is presently seeking ways of encouraging the Italian children to take up marble

playing as a new national sport.

DEAR Coach Musselman:

Remembering our discussions of your football men who were having troubles in English, I have decided to ask you, in turn, for help.

We feel that Paul Spindles, one of our most promising scholars, has a chance for a Rhodes Scholarship, which would be a great thing for him and for our college. Paul has the academic record for this award, but we find that the aspirant is also required to have other excellences, and ideally should have a good record in athletics. Paul is weak. He tries hard, but he has troubles in athletics. But he does try hard.

We propose that you give some special consideration to Paul as a varsity player, putting him if possible in the backfield of the football team. In this way, we can show a better college record to the committee deciding on the Rhodes Scholarships. We realize that Paul will be a problem on the field, but—as you have often said—cooperation between our department and yours is highly desirable, and we do expect Paul to try hard, of course. His work in the English Club and on the debate team will force him to miss many practices, but we intend to see that he carries an old football around to bounce (or whatever one does with a football) during intervals

in his work. We expect Paul to show entire goodwill in his work to you, and though he will not be able to begin football practice till late in the season he will finish the season with good attendance.

Sincerely yours,
Benjamin Plotinus
Chairman,
English Department

(Quoted from *College English*)

PSYCHOLOGISTS have discovered a new and fertile field—one centering around the knife and fork.

An assistant professor of home economics at Wayne University claims she can tell what kind of person you are by what and how you eat.

"Substitute eaters" who like pie for breakfast and dessert before the main course show they have grown up feeling insecure and unloved, she claims. They let food take the place of affection. So also does the "anxious eater," who has a long list of foods that upset him.

There is also the "ritualistic eater" who must always eat punctually and was probably protected from drafts and made to wear his rubbers in childhood. The "spoiled darling," considered frail and pampered, gets a kick out of food fads.

The "indifferent eater's" parents made him eat what he was served. Now he pays no attention to food, preferring drink.

While a child, the "irrational eater" rebelled against authority.

Now he would rather disobey his doctor and suffer from ulcers than go on a diet.

Recognize anyone you know?

RUMORS among literary circles have it that deep in the LIFE-TIME Building in Manhattan is a windowless, somberly depressing room, devoid of furnishings save for a single chair, a small, splintery desk, and a bag of lemons.

Here within these confining walls sits a man, pencil in hand, paper on desk, sucking a lemon. Hourly growing less genial and more caustic, here this man works and writes and sucks lemons. Here is the birthplace of *Time's* contribution to literary criticism, the movie review. Here is the home of the Claudia Cassidy of the motion pictures.

Time, long known for its newsy turns-of-phrase, its colorful characterizations, its make-em-laugh-and-learn philosophy of journalism, has another claim to literary notice. From the "Cinema" section come weekly reviews that still twang of sour lemon. In these reviews sarcasm, often deservedly, ricochets from one sentence to another. Whether Hollywood obligingly release one feeble movie a week for the *Time* reviewer's benefit is a matter of doubt. This critic, anonymous as he is, nevertheless ferrets out a motion picture, aims carefully and concisely, and then fires point blank with a barrage of lemon pits. Here are excerpts from a few

particularly stinging reviews.

The Tall Men. And the wind blew and the snow flew and before the censor could dig his way into the wilds of Montana and this script, Jane Russell is . . . in a log cabin with Clark Gable . . . Come Sioux or stampede, jayhawker or dust devil, nothing bothers Clark—except, of course, the fact that he has to act. But like most of his parts, this one requires nothing much but his anxious little smirk. On the other hand, he seems comfortably conscious (as moviegoers will be awkwardly aware) that the winds which howl about his hairdo do not shake the trees in the processed backgrounds; and he arrives in Montana looking as fresh as a 54-year-old daisy can.

The View from Pompey's Head, as Hamilton Basso saw it in his bestselling novel of 1954, was a rather unnerving spectacle in which the contemporary South looked like a magnolia tundra strewn with discarded Coke bottles . . . Mitchell is victorious in the end. He tells his wife that if she leaves him, she must also leave the old plantation. In the book the plantation was no more than a make-weight for the whole way of life it implied. In the picture it merely looks as if she loves her fun, but oh, that real estate!

The Deep Blue Sea, if not a soap opera, is certainly no better than a detergent drama. In this British movie, Playwright Terence (*The Winslow Boy*) Rattigan seems to be cautioning the middle-aged

married woman about switching from a dull husband to a young lover: the change may only mean a painful, new set of harness sores . . .

Sincerely Yours. Pianist Anthony Warrin, "A warm, perceptive and amusing . . . bachelor in his early 30s" (Liberace himself, according to his press agent, is 35), is at the height of his fame. His sequin-trimmed dinner jacket is faithfully buffed and his glass-topped piano Windexed by a pretty young secretary (Joanne Dru). She loves the man, but he would rather tickle the ivories . . .

The doctors call it (his disease) otosclerosis, and tell him that the only chance to restore his hearing is a "dangerous" operation called fenestration. Liberace asks for time "to think it over," and while the sound track booms a medley from Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, he paces about his penthouse with lips clamped in the expression of the well-known bust in the music room; but somehow, with his fluttery dimples and impetuous curls, he looks rather more like a pink plastic dolly with built-in colic . . .

MODERN living has taken a recent magnificent forward lunge. Science and/or electronics, ever solicitous for poor, tired old mankind, has devised a means of allowing Mr. Television Viewer to change both his mind and his channel without changing position in his reclining chair. All he

need do is pick up a ray-gun apparatus, take *careful* aim, and fire at an electric eye in the television set. If he hits his mark, presto, a new program. If, however, he misses the mark, the same channel continues; in this case, he takes even more careful aim and fires again.

Data is not yet available as to the results of hitting anything other than the television receiver. One can hardly refrain from wondering if innocent passing dogs are in peril.

JAMES Boswell was, among other things, a most prolific writer. Year after year he poured forth books, journals, letters, biographies, and travelogues. After his death, however, most of his unpublished manuscripts were lost. For centuries the literary world thought his works had been destroyed. But then suddenly they were found, some being used for wrapping paper in a French butcher shop, others stuffed away in an attic. This was the literary world's most famous game of hide-and-seek, the prize being the Boswell papers.

Collegeville has recently re-enacted this famed literary finding: Collegeville found its 1955 year-book. Whether the books were found in some dark butcher shop or in an even darker attic remains to be seen. The important fact, however, is that *Phase* has at last come home.

SOcial Security Administration reports yield much more information than merely that of the security of society. According to the latest figures, the administration has issued social security cards to 149 people named Davy Crockett and 221 people named Daniel Boone. Evidently, the Boones are more industrious, both in replenishing the earth and in occupying themselves gainfully enough to warrant cards by the Social Security Administration.

COMMENTING on the current Do-It-Yourself craze, they make this observation: "What we are looking for now is a book entitled *How to Get Other People to Do It*.

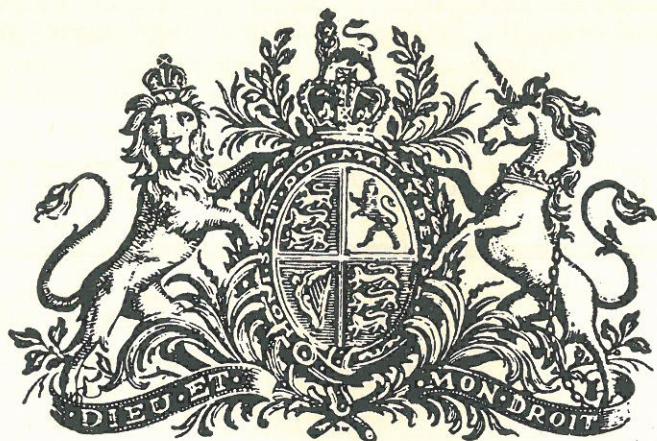
THE SWAMPS OF LORAMIE

Donald Moorman

I have walked in the swamps of Loramie in the blackness of stormy nights. I have leaped from stump to stump, from solid mud to oozing sand, and often felt the muck clinging to my knees at a misstep. I have seen the eeriness of swaying willows and felt their rasping kisses, gentle on my cheek. I have felt the omnipresence of that weird sort of loneliness found in any swamp. Muck and oozing sand, and swaying willows alone do not make a swamp. Rather the eternal solitude and calmness, broken only by the twittering of the crickets, and the occasional thundering of an old grand daddy bull-frog. Nighttime has charm in the swamps of Loramie; not the charm of lace, or the ruffles of a beautiful woman. But rather, the mighty, masculine charm that only a wild nature can produce.

I have walked in the swamps of Loramie in the light of day, as

well, I have seen the might of their giant trees stirred by the restless wind; I have heard the raucous scream of the startled crow, and the gentle chucking of the fox squirrels, high in their nests overhead. And yet, the daytime seems much to weary me, and often have I longed for the gentle night to come once more and lay its sable mantle across the tops of the trees in the swamps of Loramie, and put the crows and squirrels, and the whole of the swamps back into peaceful slumber. Loramie's swamps are far from me now. So far, that I can hardly smell the sweetness of the moist swamp land; and it is seldom that a fresh swamp breeze passes my way. Though I am far from Loramie's swamps, my feet are held fast, deeply embedded in the oozing muck, and my heart is drowned in the black waters of the swamps of Loramie.



The Man Called Peter

by Joseph Kneip

November 10, 1955
4229 Dartmouth Dr.
Brussels

Sir Anthony Eden
Prime Minister
10 Downing St.
London

Most Honored Sir:

Having a few days of leisure consolidated within the next few weeks, I have decided to leave Brussels for a short jaunt to London.

An appointment with my tailor, several informal conferences at the Air Ministry, and various chats with old friends will occupy much of my time, but there will undoubtedly be a few

spare days during which I have high hopes of renewing my acquaintance with the Princess Margaret.

Since my last association with the Princess caused much grief in government circles, much controversy in other circles, and mountainous speculation everywhere, I write to you now to clarify the purpose of my visit, namely the above appointments.

I wish to avoid as much publicity as possible and know you will be sympathetic in this. Frankly, honored sir, another reason for my visit is that I'm fed up with this peasant town and long for the pleasures that only London can

give me. And since the Princess shares many of my tastes, I will presume upon her good nature and ask for her company for the duration of my stay.

Yet may I impress upon you, who may wield power over both government and press, that my relations with Margaret remain as that of an uncle toward his favorite nece.

I desire no more talk of romantic inclinations and would even remove myself as far away as America if this would prove necessary to stop the current rumors. Perhaps this would prove a better life for me than London; certainly it would exceed life in this rural settlement the Belgians dare to call their capital.

With the possibility that I may have the pleasure of your company sometime during my stay in London, I remain

Sincerely,
Peter Townsend
Group Captain

November 14, 1955
10 Downing St.
London

His Grace the Right Honourable
Archbishop of Canterbury
Lambeth Palace
London
Your Grace:

Since pressing matters of government will not allow me time for a personal visit, I resort to this letter to call your attention to a most urgent matter.

Young Townsend is coming home!

It has been quite some time since we discussed the Princess's friend, and I had hoped he would not trouble us again.

But today I was notified by post by Townsend himself that he is coming to London within a fortnight. And, most gracious Excellency, I fear for the safety of the Princess.

You already know his reputation for stealth and wise maneuvering. I need then only to say his letter ran true to form, attempting to blind me with many inconsequential excuses for the visit, putting forth a ridiculous uncle-niece relationship, and then flattering me with an air of friendship.

Yet even within the same writing, he boasts of his expected carousals in London with our beloved and, at least now, innocent Princess, and even mentions going to America, no doubt wishing he could take Margaret with him.

From previous discussion, you realize the dire consequences of such a union as he desires to promote. I, therefore, beseech you to oppose publicly their marriage and aid me in disposing of Townsend for the good of England. God save the Queen!

I will speak to several others, including the Queen Mother, on this matter to acquire aid. I suggest that you do likewise. Yet if it is at all possible, keep this matter from your pink friend or we will never hear the end of it.

Sincerely,
Anthony Eden

November 16, 1955
Canterbury Cathedral
London

Queen Mother Elizabeth
Clarence House
London

Your Majesty:

I have obtained from the Archbishop, rather indirectly, knowledge of a visit to London by one Peter Townsend, commoner and British hero, lowborn yet an aspirant for the hand of your daughter if rumors bear a grain of truth.

I have also learned of a renewed effort of those usurpers of power who govern this fair land, holding down the working class by their firm grasp, to dispose of Townsend, or at least prevent the intended marriage.

Ma'am, this cannot be done! This marriage cannot be stopped! Think you that royalty is above common man? Would your daughter be descending by marrying one not of the royal blood? She would not indeed! For men are men, common or royal, and will not be held in subjection.

Why need there be any level of humanity? Why should one family subject a nation? Beware, ma'am, the proletariat will rise. The revolution will come. And then we will see why your blood should be better than any other.

Dissuade the forbidding of this marriage. Townsend the commoner must marry your daughter. And if you must intervene, then use your efforts to stop his trip to America with your daughter. For

there the greatest evil lies. A day in that capitalistic hell hole will disfigure your daughter for life. And should she remain there a week, there would be no salvation. She would be hopelessly corrupt.

In your hands, then, lie the fortunes of your daughter and all of England.

Sanction the marriage and welcome Townsend, the people, the proletariat, for their admission is inevitable. But halt, ma'am, I beg you, halt this flight to the evil place across the sea.

You must act, and act now—the revolution shall not be denied.

I trust in your zeal.

Sincerely,
Dean of Canterbury

November 18, 1955
Clarence House
London

My dear Elizabeth,

Leave Scotland and come home quickly, my child, if you wish to see your poor mother once more before she dies!

Peter Townsend has been seeing Margaret again, and the horrid people have been storming the gates! Reporters are everywhere, flashbulbs in the fountains, the lawns are all ruined! One of the pressmen even proposed to Louise, the third chambermaid, trying to get an inside story! Oh, it's horrible here, just horrible!

And today a letter came from the Dean, such a horrible letter, wild and raving as the Dean himself; And he threatened revolutions and uprisings and wants our

blood! And daughter Margaret and Peter are running off to America, and I know I won't be able to stop them! It's horrible, just horrible!

Please come home! You must do something! Gather the children and Philip and come home today or you may never see your mother or your sister again! Or perhaps leave the children. They will be safer there than in London.

Hurry, my child,
Mother

November 19, 1955
Balmoral Castle
Scotland

Dear Uncle Edward,

I don't know how much of the situation existing here will be carried by American newspapers, but when you receive this letter, you will undoubtedly know that Peter Townsend is seeing Margaret again.

What you may not know, I learned in a letter from mother today, is that all of London is hysterical, and that already my sister and Townsend may be on their way to America

Mother's letter, horrible, just horrible, indicates she is desperately troubled and has no hope of dissuading Margaret. Worse yet, that insufferable Dean of Canterbury has upset her again with his proletariat propaganda.

I leave for London within the hour in hopes of detaining Margaret if possible, and will try to block this impossible marriage.

But since I have little confi-

dence in my ability to change my sister's mind, I ask you, uncle, to write to her immediately and do all you can to keep her in London and away from Townsend.

She worships you, why I don't know, while she merely tolerates me.

Perhaps a letter from someone in your outcast position, a position she will approach if she marries this flyer, could influence her. Please do your best, uncle, for Margaret and for the country you ignored.

Yours truly,
Elizabeth

November 23, 1955
Waldorf-Astoria Hotel
New York, N. Y.

My dear Niece Margaret,

Having received news of your romantic adventures with some disdain and news of your intended trip to America with much joy, I write this letter with a twofold purpose.

Beloved and foolish niece, if there is still time, let me add my pleas to those who are beseeching you not to marry Peter Townsend.

Hidden at first, the uneasy knowledge that you represent a second choice of your mate soon becomes known and quickly dominates your relationship. Of this, I can advise as you well know. Niece, believe that your marriage with your flyer must, even generously, be labeled hazardous.

And, if you do marry, forsaking your position, what have you then?

No doubt you plan on a life in America as your flyer has made public. Let me tell you that there is little to look forward to here. If one doesn't like baseball and beer, he is doomed to a life of boredom in this mad country.

And where would you receive your money? We both know the government funds could not support two more outcasts. Would Peter be willing to work? Magazine articles would bring you income for a short while, but the Americans tire of things so easily.

Reconsider, child, and remain in England, loved, respected, secure, and well-fed.

As I mentioned at the beginning of this letter, I had two purposes in writing. The first was to discourage you, hoping you would remain in England. The second is now to invite you to stay with us if you do make the trip, as indeed my wife thinks you will. Our modest tower apartment here cannot compare with the palace, but the hotels in this country are frightfully expensive.

Hoping not to see you, yet longing to, I remain

Your Uncle,
Edward

December 1, 1955
Clarence House
London

Dear Mr. Townsend,

Just a short note to thank you for the wonderful week, You were always nice company, Peter. Too bad we don't have a chance to see more of each other.

You do play such an excellent game of cribbage. I'd like to play again with you sometime, perhaps in Brussels.

I received such a weird letter from my uncle in America today. I certainly wish you were still here to help me decipher it. It contains all sorts of ramblings of why we shouldn't marry, and even sillier, why we shouldn't come to America. He seems to think you are about to kidnap me. I'm afraid the years are catching up with Uncle Edward: his mind, you know.

I've met a wonderful boy here, terribly British, and perhaps I may marry him someday. Come and appraise him for me sometime. Are you still toying with the wench in Brussels whom you were telling me about? Keep me well informed.

Thanks again for the pleasure of your company. I hope to see you again soon.

Sincerely,
Margaret

LUCKY

by
**Anthony
Smith**

ALONSO Dustan McIntosh was the innocent, wide-eyed twenty-one year old operator of one of the two elevators in the Euclid Building in downtown Sandusky. The other elevator was run by a little blonde who was one of the prettiest elevator operators in the state of Ohio. Virginia Sands was the girl's name, but she does not enter the first part of this story.

Alonso was innocent. He was without a doubt the very personification of innocence. But Alonso was also the luckiest person who ever lived.

In the Euclid Building on the seventh floor there was an insurance company that had six newly-graduated college men as salesmen. These salesmen all considered Alonso an easy mark for their jokes. Alonso had been working in the building only three weeks when these salesmen discovered that he was unbelievably gullible. One week during the baseball season Tom Downey, the wittiest of the six, convinced Alonso that the last place Philadelphia team was going to sweep a three game series from the first place New York Yankees.

"Look, Al, ol' pal," Tom began, as he patted the kid on the back, "I know the Yanks don't have a chance against the Athletics this week, but to give you a chance to make an easy five bucks, I'll let you take Philadelphia, and I'll take the Yanks."

The kid looked over his shoulder at Tom and his friend as he

closed the door and started the elevator toward the seventh floor. Al's wide innocent brown eyes blinked twice. He smiled and stammered, "Gee, that's swell of you, Tom, to give me a chance like that. I really do have some bills to pay—I could sure use the money." Al hesitated a second or two and bravely blurted out, "O.K. Tom it's a bet; I'll take Philadelphia and you have the Yankees."

Tom just smiled at his friend Bill Grogan as they walked from the elevator to the office. Bill shook his head as he told Tom how he should be ashamed to take the farm boy's money.

When the three game series was over Tom was shaking his head and Al was paying some of his bills. For some unknown reason the Philadelphia team had come to life for three days and whipped the Yankees in all three games.

During the football season Tom had lost another five dollars when two supposedly evenly matched pro football teams played. The final score was 65 to 7, but Tom had only taken the precaution of getting a 40 point spot.

Of course Al did not have this kind of good luck all of the time, but whenever the bet was over two dollars Al couldn't seem to lose.

AL never seemed to realize that he was the butt of all of the jokes and fast talk that the salesmen continually passed back and forth among themselves. The kid would leave work every night at

six o'clock and tramp off to the room he had at the Y.M.C.A. Sometimes he would go to the movies, but more often he would take walks by himself or sit in his room and read. On very rare occasions he would join some of the fellows from the Y.M.C.A. in a few beers at the bar down the block from the 'Y'. When Al would have a weekend to himself he would take the bus to his parents' farm, thirty-five miles south of Sandusky.

Such was Al's general routine for the first seven months as elevator operator in the Euclid Building. All in all he lived a quiet, peaceful life, and he was happy.

The beginning of the big change in Alonso Dunstan McIntosh's life can be marked as the day when Tom Downey and Bill Grogan asked Al to have a beer with them in celebration of Al's seventh month on the job. Tom had a reason for asking Al out, and the reason was that he needed ten dollars to finance a date he had made with Virginia Sands, the good looking girl who ran the elevator next to Al's.

It was below Tom's dignity to borrow the money honestly. In order to get around doing this he had an idea. After two drinks Tom pulled out a cigarette, lit it, and looked across the table at Al. "Al," he began in a serious tone, "I need ten bucks tonight. I don't like to borrow money but I've got an offer to make." Tom reached into his pocket and drew out his

wallet. He thumbed through some papers and then pulled one out. "Here, Al, is something I hate to part with, because I'm sure its going to be lucky."

The piece of paper was a five dollar ticket on the Irish Sweepstakes. Tom talked and talked; he told Al a cock-and-bull story about the letter he had gotten from the Irish Sweepstakes Company telling him how his ticket was one of the few that was advanced into the semi-final round. Tom told the eager wide-eyed kid how he wouldn't be surprised if that very ticket would win one of the \$100,000 prizes. After Tom had finished, the kid just nodded his head a few times as if he was thinking how he was going to spend all that money.

"Tom," Al said, "I sure hate to take advantage of you like this when you're broke, but this sounds like a good deal." Al reached for his wallet and drew forth a ten dollar bill. "You're right Tom, ten bucks isn't too much at all for a ticket that's in the semi-finals." With that the kid handed the bill over to Tom.

ONE morning two months later Al was all smiles when Tom came into the elevator. "What's with you, my friend?" Tom asked.

"Look," Al announced, as he thrust a check out at Tom. Tom read over the check and turned a little green around his eyes. The check was for fifteen hundred dollars and it was made out to A. D. McIntosh. The ticket for the

Irish Sweepstakes had won one of the smaller prizes.

Tom managed to smile, but he was really mad now. He was not going to stand by and watch that boy from the farm end up on the best end of everything. "After all," Tom explained to his pals in the insurance office, "I got my pride, and that hayseed kid isn't going to keep getting away with this luck of his."

Tom took three weeks of almost constant thought before he hit upon the correct method of getting revenge. He came into the office one morning with one of his self-satisfied looks. Bill Grogan and the rest of the salesmen knew that Tom Downey had been struck with another bright idea.

"Gather round me boys," Tom almost sang to the office force, "I have definitely hit on a plan to fix our mutual friend, Alonso D. McIntosh. That kid practically stole my fifteen hundred dollars, but I'm going to be able to enjoy watching him throw that money away."

This statement aroused the curiosity of the other five salesmen. None of them was above a good practical joke and in one way or another all of them had managed to have his share of fun at the expense of the handsome gullible elevator operator.

All of the men gathered around Tom's desk to listen to this plot that Tom had been brooding over for three weeks.

"First of all," Tom began, "how many of you guys think that our

buddy Al has ever gone out with a girl?" Tom paused for a few seconds and looked around at the faces of his five friends. "Just as I thought," he went on, "you boys think the same as me. That kid has never so much as looked at a girl with the intention of trying to take her out on a date." All of the salesmen nodded in complete agreement.

"Well," Tom continued, "I have one more question. How many of you characters have taken that beautiful little blonde golddigger out?" Tom was referring to Virginia Sands, the other elevator operator. Around the desk there were longing sighs mixed with groans as the boys recalled the very pleasant way that the vivacious brown eyed elevator operator had caused them all to spend twice as much as they had wanted to spend when they had dated her. Each one of the salesmen had dated Ginny several times, knowing full well that the date would always cost them too much money.

As for Virginia Sands herself there is much that could be said. She is the type of girl who has been causing the most confirmed bachelors to walk down the aisles of churches ever since churches have been. Virginia was twenty years old, blonde, and brown eyed. She was five feet two inches tall, and she weighed one hundred and ten pounds. That is how Virginia was described on her driver's license. There are many girls that are the same if we look

only at a driver's license, but there are not many girls who are as well put together in life as is Miss Virginia Sands, elevator operator, Sandusky, Ohio. That license could not tell how her blonde hair was a deep rich golden blonde that sparkled and glowed in the sunlight. Her eyes were more than just brown. They were a rich deep brown that were clear and clean looking. Those beautiful large eyes by themselves were enough to make any man on earth stop short, gasp for breath and perhaps make him mutter, "It might have been." Virginia also was blessed with a little nose that was on the verge of being one of these irrestable turned-up noses. When she smiled her eyes lit up, and there were dimples in her cheeks. When she laughed the clear ring of her voice warmed the heart of any man within hearing distance.

For the year and a half that little Virginia had been working in the Euclid Building, she had produced a noticeable effect on every male that she had ever talked to except one. The one male who held that questionable distinction was our paragon of innocence and gullibility, Alonso D. McIntosh. As far as anybody could guess from outward signs, Alonso never considered Virginia any more seriously than a statue or a picture. Never had Al asked this girl for a date; never had he asked her if he could walk her home after work. Each night since Al had begun to work nine months before, he and Ginny had said good-

bye to each other when work was done, and then Al would hurry to his room without another word.

This is just briefly how things were with Virginia and Al. It was a different story with Virginia and the six slick salesmen from the seventh floor of the Euclid Building. Five of them had dated her occasionally and had not even begun to make a hit with her.

All of the men knew that Tom Downey had spent a lot of money on Ginny. Next to Virginia Sands' outstanding beauty, she was renowned for her voracious appetite. When she sat her one hundred and ten pounds of pert beauty down in a restaurant, and took a menu into her hands, it was well known that she could see no further than the fillet mignon on the a la carte page. She also had an unquenchable thirst for champagne cocktails. Tom Downey had courage though, and he never admitted that he was getting nowhere with Virginia.

This explains how the situation was when Tom asked how many of his pals had taken the blonde golddiger out. After the salesmen had commented on the desirability and dangers of dating Miss Sands, Tom continued, "Boys, you all know that it costs a small fortune to date this little gal, so I've been thinking that our boy Al could not spend that money of his any faster and have less to show for it than by taking little old Ginny out on the town."

"You got a good idea Tom," Bill Grogan commented, "except

for one thing. You and the rest of us know that Al will never in this green world get enough nerve to ask Virginia for a date."

"I know, I know Bill, but I got it all figured out. You know how the kid believes everything he's told? Well if we all get together and convince him that Virginia is crazy about him and then tell him she wants to go out with him, he'll be like a fish out of water."

Everyone smiled and nodded their heads. They knew that Virginia had heard about the fifteen hundred dollars; and they were certain that she would never refuse the offer of a date from anyone with fifteen hundred dollars. She would be able to eat more steaks than she had ever seen.

THAT same evening as Tom was going home he began to work on Al. As they were going down on the elevator, he began, "Al, you know, I was talking to Ginny Sands this morning, and she was telling me that she thought you were one of the nicest men that she had ever met."

"Aw" was Al's reply, and his ears turned red.

Tom went on, "Look now, old pal, I don't want you to ever repeat this, but she would knock my ears off if she knew that I had ever told you this."

"Ah, gee, I won't say a word."

"Boy, oh boy, I wish I was in your shoes." Tom said, "If that beautiful girl ever said that about me, I would probably marry her." That was the end of the first chapter of the plot.

Four days had sped by and poor bewildered Al didn't know which way to turn. All of a sudden everybody was complimenting him; telling him what a fine up-standing fellow he was and how much Ginny thought of him. Al had never had such things happen to him. "Of course," he said to himself, "I think Ginny is a beautiful girl, and she is very polite and has always treated me good." He thought along that line for the first two days and had almost worked up courage enough to ask the little blonde out. Then he had a relapse. "You know very well," he mused, "that a good lookin' girl like Virginia would never have anything to do with a guy like you." That was Al's attitude on the fourth day.

About five o'clock of the fourth day Al told Tom just how he felt. That was all Tom needed. He knew that Al had almost been hooked, and he was pretty sure it would not take much more talking to have the farm boy caught for good.

"Look," Tom began, "that girl is about ready to ask you out herself." With that Tom stopped for a full thirty seconds, and glared at Alonso as though he was the meanest, lowest form of a creature that ever walked the streets of Sandusky. After Al had gulped a few times and shifted his weight from one leg to the other, Tom went on: "Al, you are too good a fellow to let that sweet little girl humble herself to ask you for a date. There is only one thing you

can do and that's to ask her for a date immediately."

That was all it took. Al was shy and very quiet, but he did have pride and he would never be the one to force an innocent young woman to humble herself. "O.K.," he finally said to Tom, "tonight before I leave for home I'll ask her if she will go to a movie with me."

Tom cleared his throat and said, "Al old pal, I want to give you some serious advice. When you ask a girl out for the first time, you have got to really treat her right. Now if I was you I would ask her out for dinner too. You don't want to seem like a miser do you?"

Tom had done it again. Al fell for the whole story. He nodded his head. "You're right Tom. I can't look cheap on my first date with Virginia. Tom, I just don't know how to thank you enough for all your help. I have never told anyone before, but I'll tell you, this will be the first time I have ever had a date." With that revelation Al looked down at the floor and moved his right foot back and forth a few times.

Tom looked at the kid and shook his head. He almost backed out of his plan, but he couldn't resist the temptation. "Al," Tom consoled, "it's never too late, and you couldn't find a nicer girl for your first date than Virginia. Not only that, I believe Ginny had really fallen head over heels in love with you." Tom knew that that was a terrible lie to tell Al but he decided he had better make sure that the kid was trapped for cer-

tain.

When Al heard that statement he blushed and stammered something that was unintelligible.

At six o'clock, one hour after Tom had left the building, Al and Ginny were walking out of the main entrance on their way home.

"It sure has been a beautiful day, Al, hasn't it?"

"Yeah, it's too bad we have to work on days like this."

"It sure is," Ginny agreed.

"Ginny," Al blurted out, "I been thinkin' that if you weren't busy tomorrow night, maybe I could take you out to dinner and a show." If Tom had seen how Al blushed as he stared down at his feet, he would not have had nerve enough to let the joke go on. Al just stood there and waited for an answer from the little blonde girl standing at his side.

Ginny was almost lost for words. She looked up at Al and smiled her sweetest smile; "I'd love to go, Al. What time should I be ready?"

ALL in all the date went fine, and Al did manage to live through the whole evening. The two of them went to a little restaurant downtown, but Ginny was not hungry, and she had only some sort of salad. After the meal she said she would just like to take a walk, so they strolled through

the summer evening, talking quietly.

The next morning Al told his good friend Tom everything. "Tom, she's the nicest girl in the whole world, I just don't know how to thank you for settin' me straight."

Tom could hardly say a word. "How much money did you spend, Al?"

"Oh, about three dollars, I guess. Why?"

"Nothing; no reason; I was just wondering." That was too much for Tom. He scratched his head as he walked from the elevator to the office.

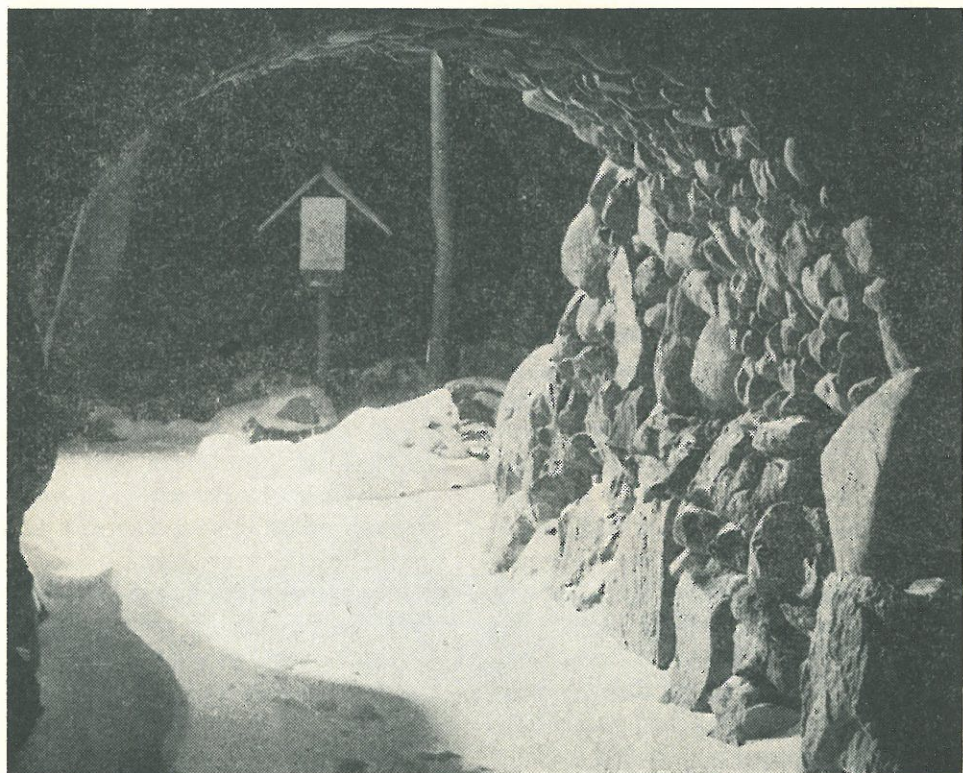
It was a month and a half after that incident when Tom Downey received the *coup de grace*. One evening Al asked Tom if he could buy him a drink after work. Tom said that he would be glad to join him.

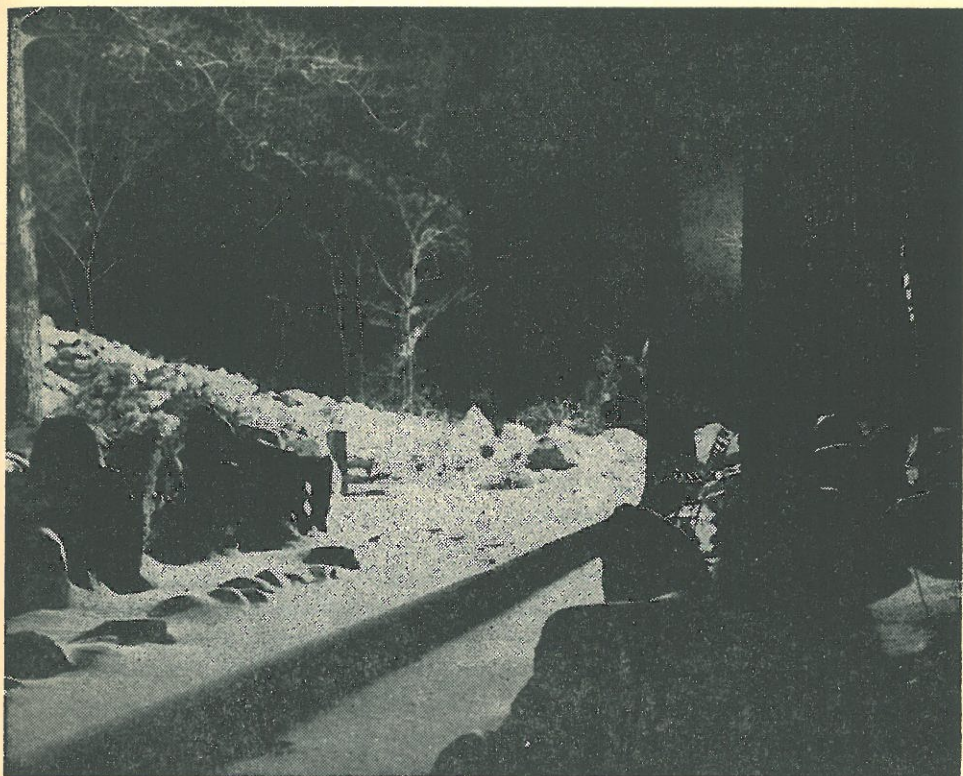
"There's nothing like a cold beer after a hot August day like this," Tom sighed, as he drank and smacked his lips.

"Tom," Al started, "you're the best friend I've got in this town, and I'm grateful. I mean it was you who told me how Ginny felt about me, and I would like—well, I mean Ginny and I are going to—well in three weeks we're going to be married. Do you suppose you could be the best man?"

ALONE IN THE WOODS

The moonbeams falling in the silver woods
Smile quite gently on the cedar cross,
This snow-decked symbol of the chief of man,
Alone in the woods,
Alone in the winter winds.





The moonbeams leaping in the silver trees
Smile quite gently on this cedar cross,
This snow-decked figure of the chief of men,
Alone in the woods,
Caressed by the winter winds.

—Donald Moorman

Radiation and Genes

*Hanley Science
Essay Award, 1955*

by James Wright

IN the last two decades a great deal of research has been carried out to determine the effects of radiation on genes. Throughout this period radiation has been the principal tool of the geneticist in discovering the mechanisms of heredity. The outstanding feature of radiation responsible for its utility in genetic research is the fact that it produces sudden variations or "mutations" in species.

Mutations have been known for a long time. In 1889 a hornless Hereford calf appeared in a Kansas herd, and from this has been bred the present "polled" (hornless) Hereford cattle, valued because they suffer fewer injuries

than horned cattle. The Ancon breed of short-legged sheep originated from a single short-legged sheep mutant which came from parent sheep with normal, long legs. Likewise, the variations of plants and animals such as the color varieties of sweet peas, the hybrids of corn, the different breeds of cattle and swine, and other domesticated plants and animals were derived from a single ancestor that was a single departure from the normal.

Mutations puzzled scientists for many years. They had discovered that the entire bodily constitution—including surface traits such as color, shape, height, and other external manifestations, and also the intricate system of chemical and physiological activities—was determined by the ultimate factors of heredity, the "genes." They also knew that although there are several thousand genes in a single gamete, a change in any one of these genes would produce a mutation. But the cause of these mutations seemed to be an unconquerable enigma during the early periods of genetic history.

In former years, gene mutations appeared so infrequently that geneticists had little chance to observe them. Experiments with flies were performed, but one had to sit and wait for a mutation to show itself, a process that involved the counting of thousands of flies for every mutation that was found. Consequently, little progress in mutation research was accomplished.

THEN, in 1927, Professor Muller of Indiana University discovered *that if flies were exposed to X-rays, mutations would occur about 150 times as often*. Immediately, under X-ray bombardment, mutations began coming thick and fast, making possible extensive research on mutations. The discovery that X-rays produce mutations marked a new era in genetics. It proved for the first time that mutations had natural causes, and soon after his discovery Muller suggested that mutations were caused by cosmic rays or by natural radiations of the earth. Furthermore, this discovery made possible an attack on many problems in genetics.

As research on mutations progressed, geneticists discovered the mechanism by which radiation affects a mutation or a change in a gene. The gene may be changed in either of two ways: by being directly struck by the radiation, or by the action of the radiation on the cell (either the egg or the sperm) in which the genes are contained.

The gene is a large protein molecule. Radiation, when it directly strikes the gene, produces a mutation by causing the "ionization" of this molecule. This ionizing action causes the atoms of the gene to change their structure. Any radiation, whether in the form of X-rays or gamma rays or particles such as beta rays or neutrons, ionizes the atoms among which it passes. Radiation removes an electron from an atom of the molecule

(the gene), forming a *positive* ion. The free electron then joins another atom to form a *negative* ion. This ionization changes the genes in an important manner, making it a great deal more active chemically, and consequently, causes a mutation.

When the genes are not directly hit by the radiation, they may still be changed by the action of the radiation on the cell in which they are contained. The main constituent of the cell is water. Consequently, when radiation passes through a cell, the water molecules are most likely to be ionized, simply because of their predominance in number. Radiation removes an electron from the water molecule (H_2O) and forms a *positive* H_2O ion. The H_2O then breaks down into a *H* (hydrogen ion) and a *neutral* *OH* (hydroxyl group). The free electron attaches itself to another water molecule and forms a *negative* H_2O ion which, in turn, breaks into a *neutral* *H* (hydrogen atom) and a *negative* *OH* (hydroxyl ion). These ions may react with one another to form the original substance, water, but they may also react to form H_2O_2 (hydrogen peroxide) and HO_2 (hydrogen dioxide) or other compounds. It has been demonstrated that the ionization of water and the resulting reactions produce four powerful oxidizing agents: H_2O_2 , O_2 , and HO_2 . These oxidizing agents can oxidize substances in the cell including the genes. The genes so affected are chemically changed

and, therefore, cannot carry on their normal chemical reactions. Consequently, mutations occur.

PERHAPS the most remarkable thing in connection with mutation is the fact that a gene, after having mutated, should reproduce itself in its changed form. Also remarkable is the fact that a change originating in the microscopic dimensions of a single cell is capable of producing a new form of life that spreads until it covers the earth. Fundamentally, evolution is possible because of these facts, and today, since only gene mutations give rise to new kinds of genes, the whole concept of evolution centers around mutations.

Of greatest present interest is the fact that atomic radiation produces mutations. Since Muller's discovery of X-ray effects, geneticists have realized that gene mutations in humans could be caused by radiation. The danger from "A" bombs in regard to gene mutations is well expressed by Amram Scheinfeld quoted from *The New You and Heredity*:

But no one dreamed that within a few decades the whole world might yet be turned into a vast laboratory in which human beings would subject themselves to mutation experiments. That is precisely what began to happen on the fateful day in 1945 when atomic bombs were dropped on Japan. For the effects of atomic radiation in inducing mutations may be even more intense than those of

ordinary X-rays.

There is little doubt that mutations have been produced by the effect of the atomic bomb in Japan. Muller has said, "I do not think that geneticists would question that recessive mutations so produced will go down for hundreds of generations."

In the immediate reproductive casualties among the survivors of the bombed areas in Japan, were a great number of cases of sterility, miscarriages, and the birth of many defective babies who, as fetuses, had been damaged by the radiation. But when no great increase in genetically abnormal children was reported in the succeeding years after the atom blasts in Japan, there seemed to be no cause for alarm. But Professor Muller, Professor Haldane, and other noted geneticists and scientists were quick to point out that the really serious genetic effects of atomic radiation would not manifest themselves until at least several generations had elapsed. There is no doubt among most geneticists that in generations to come, descendants of persons in the bombed areas will show a much higher than average number of genetic defects and abnormalities.

This belief seemed to have been confirmed through findings following the Bikini test explosions of 1946. In fruit flies and other experimental animals, and also in various seeds and plants placed aboard the bombed ships, there occurred the same types of mutations, with a variety of defects

and abnormalities, to these plants and animals that had previously occurred to the plants and animals irradiated in the atom blasts in Japan.

ANOTHER finding was that, long after the Bikini explosions, some of the fish in the area, and some of the underwater plants, were still "radioactive." This leads to a further warning.

The effects of atomic radiation need not be confined to areas in which bombs are dropped. The ray particles (alpha, beta, gamma, and neutrons) by means of wind, air, or water may be dispersed for great distances; or they might find their way into fish and vegetation, and thence into people.

After considering these points the danger from the atom bomb becomes apparent. This potent force in the power of our fumbling hands is not only capable of killing vast numbers of people, but can also damage our gene system and our heredity irreparably. Here are three warnings:

Professor Muller: "When an atomic bomb kills 100,000 people directly, enough mutations may have been implanted in the survivors to cause at least as many deaths, dispersed through the population, over thousands of years . . . Repeated exposure to radiation, generation after generation, could in time succeed in destroying the gene system beyond recovery."

Professor Haldane: "The killing of 10 percent of humanity by an attack with atomic

bombs might not destroy civilization. But the production of abnormalities in 10 percent of the people by gene mutations induced by radioactivity may very easily destroy it."

Dr. George G. Simpson: "Man has caused the extinction of numerous other organisms, and is probably quite capable of wiping himself out, too. If he has not yet quite achieved the possibility, he is making rapid progress in that direction. In this matter he cannot place responsibility for rightness or wrongness on God or on nature."

The prospect is staggering. Much that has been said is now true to much greater extreme since the "hydrogen bomb" has become a reality. Geneticist Alfred H. Sturtevant said recently:

The last H-bomb test alone probably produced more than 70 human mutations which are likely to produce large numbers of defective individuals in the future."

Physiologist E. D. Adrian states:

(man) cannot stand more than a few thousand large atomic blasts, whether they hit . . . or miss.

However, not all scientists are worried about the situation. A few scientists, definite minority, either reject the idea of danger entirely or disregard its import. Naturally enough Physicist Gioacchino Failla thoughtlessly comes to this conclusion:

The question of how many

H-bombs can safely be exploded is irrelevant. To remain free we must develop powerful nuclear bombs. We must continue our test program.

Can it be true that the good of freedom and the evil of self-destruction are proportional? Shall we ignore, as Dr. Failla seems to ignore, what could be the impending doom of man?

A step was taken in the right direction in March, 1955, when a group of American scientists asked the United Nations to start an international inquiry into the genetic hazard of further H-bomb tests. If investigations indicate that future generations would be injured by many explosions, they want an international agreement to limit further tests.

PRECISE knowledge of the deleterious effect of radiation on genes must be obtained. It is urgent that the U.N. proceed to conduct experiments to obtain sure scientific knowledge of these effects. At present there are 204 U.S. laboratories investigating the mysterious effects of radiation on man. But they have been dealing with radiation disease only. So far the most hopeful discoveries about radiation provide only fruitful hints on how to protect man. For example, radiologists are now testing a new drug, beta-mercaptoethylamine, which enables mice to survive double the lethal dose of radiation. If it proves to be equally effective for humans, it will be a precious added source of protection for people trapped in

radioactive fallout zones. *But nothing has been done to prevent the long-range effects of radiation, its potential harm to heredity.*

Scientists of the world are at present anxiously waiting for the U.N. to take concerted action thoroughly to investigate this matter. Let us hope that these investigations will soon commence and that the facts thus uncovered will not be as appalling as the speculations foreseen by modern scientists. Let us hope that the results of these investigations will be comforting to those who are aware of the grave danger.

There may be some comfort offered in the fact that the hydrogen bomb in its present state is no more radioactive than an ordinary uranium bomb. There is no reason to believe, however, that the radioactive effect of the H-bomb cannot be increased, if that is what designers wanted to do. A simple process would transform an H-bomb into a fantastic force of such potency that it could poison a whole country, or perhaps, in a miscalculation, the whole world. In a world with totalitarianism so prevalent, the possibility of such a bomb being dropped is not so remote.

Indeed such bombs could bring about the results so dreaded by modern geneticists. The gene system of all living things including man could be damaged thoroughly enough as to effect the destruction of civilization and of mankind.

Beckon of the Dusty Road

Alone and homeless in the evening.
It is strange how a country road will beckon
To be followed out of sight into the dusk.
Yet, there is a longing in my very soul
That says it is not strange, but grand.
And so I follow the beckon of the dusty road
Into the silent solemnity of night.
And I am happy with the silver of the moon.
And happy with the smiling stars.
Past sleepy farm yards of silver,
Calm and serene in the pensive moon;
Past murmuring streams of perfect starlight,
Past woods and copses of dreamland,
Sighing in the very silvered air of Paradise,
The country road of the daytime,
Now a pathway for the feet of gods,
Beckons on and on in the starlight.
The path is clear 'neath the country moon,
And surely my heart is there,
Following down the precious path
That leads the wanderer home.

—DONALD MOORMAN